Was it for Thy pleasure or for my sake Thou didst win me?
If now Thou turn me away, the world will blame Thee,
Oh Arunachala! "
The Marital Garland of Letters, Verse 4.

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THE MOUNTAIN PATH

(QUARTERLY)

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CONTENTS

	Page
EDITORIAL: The Two Paths	4
Resurrection - *Muruganar*	6
The Maharshi and the Path of Knowledge — *T. M. P. Mahadevan*	7
The Forty Verses on Reality - *Sri Ramana Maharshi*	12
The Maharshi and the Path of Devotion — *A. Devaraja Mudaliar*	15
The World - *A. Rao*	18
The Marital Garland of Letters — *Sri Ramana Maharshi*	19 23
Bhakti Marga in Buddhism - *Lama Anagarika Govinda.*	24
Jnana and Bhakti - *Dr. T. N. Krishnaswami*	31
Silent Teaching - *Ethel Merston*	31
Jnana Marga in Christianity - *Joel Goldsmith*	32
Arrows from a Christian Bow - IV: — Jnana and Bhakti in Christianity - *Sagittarius*	37
ASPECTS OF ISLAM - IV: — The Sufi Path of Love - *Abdullah Qutbuddin*	38
From Tayumanavar - *Prof. K. R. R. Sastry*	40
The Essential Identity - *Wei Wu Wei*	41
How I came to the Maharshi - IV: *Dilip Kumar Roy*	43
The Name	45
Letters To A Brother - IV: Samadhi - *Nagamma*	48
Ch'an Master Hsu Yun — *Upasaka Lu K'uan Yu (Charles Luk)*	49
Introducing Muruganar	53
Book Reviews	55
Ashram Bulletin	67
Letters to the Editor	70
Sri Ramana Mantapa Nidhi	73

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THE MOUNTAIN PATH

The aim of this journal is to set forth the traditional wisdom of all religions and all ages, especially as testified to by their saints and mystics, and to-clarify the paths available to seekers in the conditions of our modern world.

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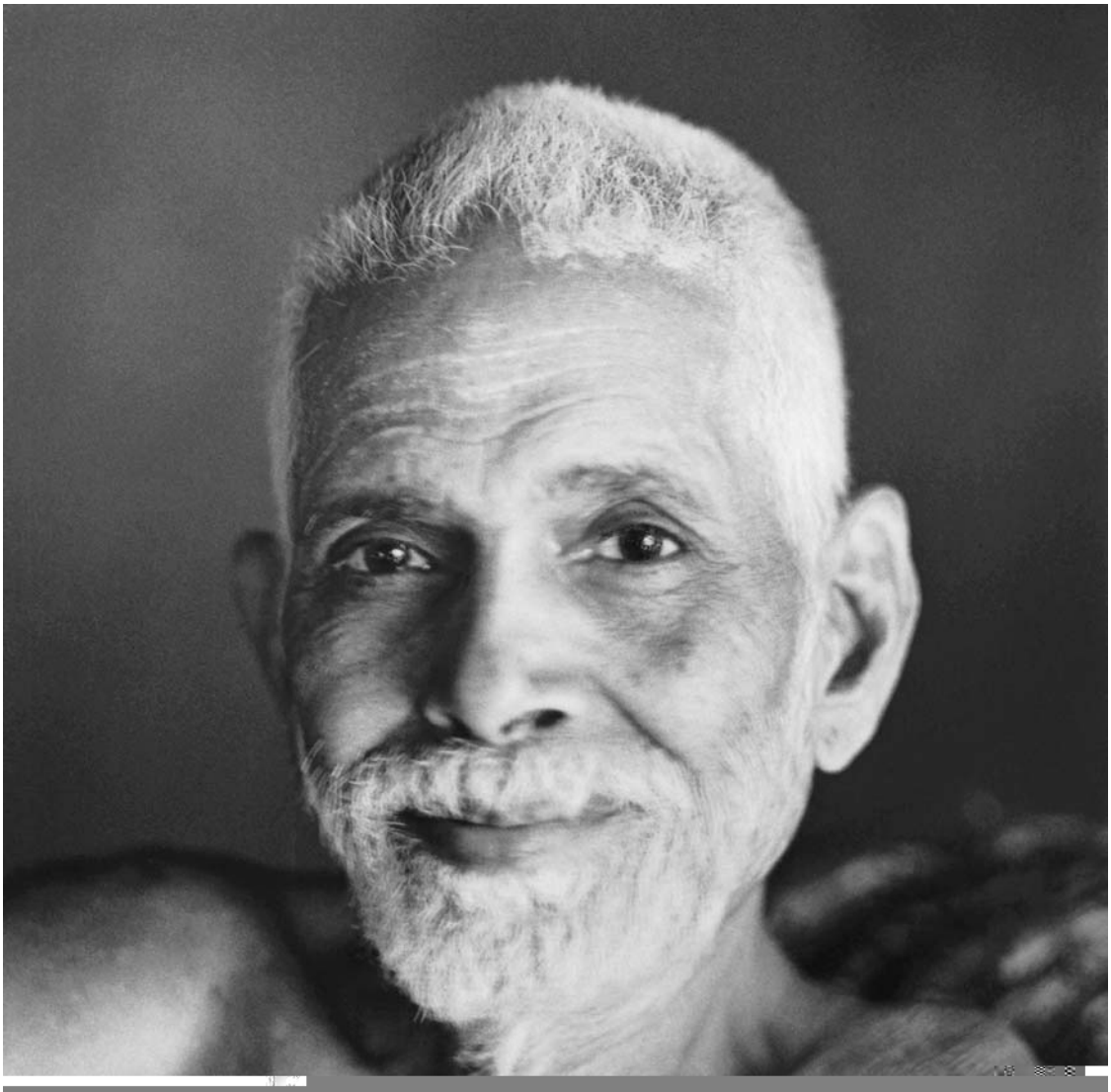


Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

Bhakti marga is in general the path trodden by Christian and Muslim seekers (and indeed, the very word 'Islam' means 'submission'). The path of knowledge, on the other hand, is in keeping with the original genius of Buddhism and Taoism, although both found themselves obliged later to provide devotional paths for the many who could not aspire so high. Both paths exist side by side in Hinduism. Indeed, some of the greatest saints have been *bhaktas*. Sri Ramakrishna said "I don't want to become the honey but to remain separate so as to taste the honey." The great Marathi poet-saint Tukaram spoke sometimes from the viewpoint of Identity but was primarily a *bhakta*. He wrote: "I do not seek God-Consciousness (*Brahma-Jnana*). I shall always desire dual consciousness — Thou shalt ever remain my Lord and I Thy devotee."

In Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam, although not in Christianity, the most widely used *bhakti* technique is invocation of the name of God. "The simplest method is chanting the Name and freeing the mind from restlessness," said Swami Ramdas, a great modern *bhakta*.[6]

The Maharshi also offered his devotees the path of devotion as an alternative to Self-enquiry. He always prescribed Self-enquiry in the first place, but if devotees complained that they found this too difficult he would often add: "There are two ways: ask yourself 'Who am I?' or submit." And indeed, many of his devotees did, and still do, follow him by the path of love, surrender, devotion. Even in this case, however, he did not give an invocation but only prescribed (as did Sai Baba also)[7] complete surrender to the Guru. He has been known to make the tremendous statement: "Submit to me and I will strike down the mind." Or: "Only be still and I will do the rest."

It is not an easy thing to keep the mind still, without thoughts, or to submit as Bhagavan understood submission. When one does, the barrier to Truth is weakened and God, Self, Bhagavan does indeed break through and strike down the impostor ego. But what an assurance to receive! And what power in him who can give it!

The surrender has to be complete: not only surrender of all the ego's desires but of the ego that has the desires, until in the end it turns out to be an illusory thing, and *bhakti* becomes *jnana*.

Whichever path one follows, the thing is to follow it, not to argue about it. A Christian priest once told Bhagavan that he considered the goal of mystic union envisaged by Christians to be different from the Hindu goal of *Moksha* and superior to it, and Bhagavan replied: "All right, attain that first and then see whether you still find any difference or anything to criticise." That was always his reply — to turn the critic from theory to practice. Argument did not interest him, only understanding and sincere effort.

6 - For an article on whom see our issue of January 1964.

7 - For an article on whom see our Issue of July 1964.

RESURRECTION

Lines from the *Guru Vachaka Kovai* (Tamil) of Muruganar

Tortured on body's cross, the Jesus-self
Suffers and dies.
The Passion ended, see the Christ-self rise,
Immortal Spirit,
God beyond the skies!

THE MAHARSHI AND THE PATH OF KNOWLEDGE

By T. M. P. Mahadevan

Prof. T. M. P. Mahadevan, head of the philosophy department of Madras University, is known not only in India but in academic circles throughout the world as one of the leading exponents of Advaita. He has presented the truth of its doctrines in books and articles and at the many international philosophical conferences he has attended. Best known, perhaps, of his books are Gaudapada, A Study in Early Advaita (published by the University of Madras) and Philosophy of Advaita (published by Ganesh & Co., Madras). What is perhaps not so well known is that, behind the defensive armaments of philosophy, Prof. Mahadevan is heart and soul a devotee of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi.

Prof. Mahadevan has the ability, so rare among professional philosophers, to express himself in case of need in direct language free from academic terminology. Knowing 'The Mountain Path' to circulate far beyond academic circles, he has written this article for us in language that all can follow, without sacrificing anything in profundity or exactitude.

Jnana or Knowledge, according to Advaita, is the sole direct means to Liberation. *Jnana* may mean Self-Knowledge or knowledge as a path to Self-realization. The former, *svarupa-jnana*, is the Self as pure Consciousness, the latter is the process culminating in *akhandakara-vritti*, that is the mode of mind whose content is the impartite Self. Advaitic teaching is that knowledge is the path one should follow in order to gain Self-Knowledge, which is the same as Liberation or *Moksha*.

The reason why knowledge is considered the direct means to Liberation is to be found in the conception of Liberation itself. Liberation means release from the cycle of birth-and-death. It is the psycho-physical organism that is involved in this cycle. However, there is no real involvement because the psycho-physical organism and the world in which it is apparently involved are only projections of nescience (*avidya*) and not real entities. Again due to nescience, the Self is wrongly identified with the psychophysical organism and is thought to be born and to die. This is the metaphysical error that is at the root of all evil. The confusion between the Self and the not-self and the erroneous mingling of their characteristics constitutes nescience. Each earlier appearance in the world of the apparent self is

the cause of the next subsequent appearance, so that in this sense nescience is said to be beginningless. Nevertheless it is not eternal but can be destroyed. But only by true knowledge. When knowledge dawns nescience is destroyed and it is realized that the Self was never bound but is ever free. This is Liberation.

Action cannot effect Liberation because action is not opposed to bondage and to its cause, nescience. When one says this one does not mean by 'action' simple movement of the body but movement with a sense of agency. 'I act' in this sense implies the identification of the Self with

the ego as agent. It is this conceit of agency that constitutes the spring of action. The wrong identification and the consequent conceit are caused by nescience. Oblivion to the true nature of the Self as pure Consciousness is thus what gives rise to action; therefore action cannot destroy nescience but only confirm bondage to it.

Action is said to produce any of four results: origination (*utpatti*), attainment (*prapti*), modification (*vikara*) and purification (*samskara*). Action of various kinds is required for, say, producing a pot out of clay (origination), arriving at a destination (attainment), making curds out of milk (modification), and cleaning a dusty mirror (purification). Liberation, which is the eternal nature of the Self, belongs to none of these four categories. The Self is eternal, so not to be originated; it is all-pervading, being non-dual, so not to be attained; it is uncompounded, being infinite, so not to be modified; it is blemishless, being of the sole consistency of Consciousness, so not to be purified. Therefore action can do nothing to occasion Liberation.

In fact Liberation is not to be occasioned at all. It is true that Liberation is said to be 'attained' when nescience is 'destroyed' by knowledge; but the terms 'attainment' and 'destruction' have to be understood here in a figurative sense. There are two kinds of attainment and two of destruction: attainment of the unattained and apparent attainment of the already attained; destruction of the undestroyed and apparent destruction of the non-existent. For the first kind action is needed, for the second knowledge. For instance, for getting an ornament made out of gold action is needed. But suppose a person thinks he has lost his gold chain when in fact he is wearing it round his neck, all the time only knowledge is needed. Someone points out to him that he is wearing it and it is as though he had found it. Similarly, for destroying a real snake action is needed, but for destroying a snake imagined in what is really a piece of rope all that is needed is enough light to see that there is no snake. The attainment of Liberation and destruction of bondage are of the second kind, since Liberation is eternal and therefore ever attained. It only seems to be unattained on account of nescience, and on the dawn of knowledge its eternal nature is revealed. Similarly, bondage is unreal, being caused by nescience. At the dawn of knowledge it seems to be removed, but it was never there. It follows, then, that knowledge and not action is the means of gaining Liberation and destroying bondage.

Action, however, is not without its use. Disinterested and dedicated action (*nishkama karma, karma-yoga*) serves to purify the mind and thus prepare it for the path of knowledge. Although knowledge itself is not an act, it is the mind that has to seek and gain it. A mind that is impure and filled with passions and selfish desires cannot even turn in the direction of Self-knowledge. It is only the mind that has been rendered pure by the elimination of passions that will be inclined to pursue the path of knowledge. The discipline by which the passions may be eliminated is the performance of one's duties without caring for rewards. Craving for possessions and thirst for sense-enjoyments are what defile the mind and make it unfit for higher pursuits, Therefore the mind must first, as a preliminary, be freed from defilements, and this can be done through action not motivated by finite ends.

Bhakti yoga (the path of devotion) and *raja-yoga* (the path of mind control) can also find a place in the Advaitic scheme, as subordinates to the path of knowledge. Their purpose is to make the mind one-pointed and inward-turned. Attraction to false values, distraction and disintegration are the characteristics of the tainted mind. The tendency of the mind to flow outward towards finite objects of enjoyment should be arrested, and it should be orientated towards God, the highest value. This is the purpose of *bhakti-yoga*.

It is the nature of the mind to be inconstant, darting from object to object, turbulent, obstinate

and wayward. The function of *raja-yoga* is to discipline it and render it one-pointed. Constant and sustained practice of concentration (*abhyasa*) together with breath-control (*pranayama*) and other practices and cultivation of an attitude of detachment (*vairagya*) help to subdue and purify the mind and thus make it eligible to follow the path of knowledge.[1]

Liberation is not necessarily a posthumous achievement, since it is the eternal nature of the Self. Even while in the body one can realize the Truth. This is known as *jivanmukti*. It is sometimes asked why the body should still continue in the case of one who has attained Liberation; but the question does not arise for the Liberated himself, since for him there is no body. It is the unrealized who see him with a body and ask the question. As a reply it is said that the body lasts as long as the *prarabdha* (that part of the karma which is to fructify in this lifetime), and that after that there is *videhamukti* (Liberation without a body). In truth, however, there is no distinction in *Moksha*.

Thus Advaitic teaching is that knowledge is the sole direct way to Liberation and that Liberation is the eternal nature of the Self.

The teaching of Sri Ramana Maharshi is in perfect accord with this. It is of unique value as an independent confirmation of the truth of Advaita, since he did not formulate a theory after formal study of Vedanta but discovered the path and its Goal afresh, gaining plenary experience through a single brief act of Self-enquiry. And later, when the texts were read out to him, he recognised that they were speaking the same heart-language that he knew, the language of Advaita.[2]

The Maharshi was no writer in the usual sense of the word. Sometimes he put in writing his occasional oral instructions and expositions. Some of these stray writings are in prose, some in verse, mostly in Tamil but some in Sanskrit and a few in Malayalam and Telugu. They constitute what may rightly be called the 'Ramanopanishad', since we have in them authentic instruction in the doctrine and path of Advaita.[3]

Their central teaching is that the path of Self-enquiry is the direct way to Self-realization. The sense of 'I' is natural and common to all, but few care to enquire into the actual nature of this 'I'. We take it for granted and employ such empirical phrases as 'I came', 'I went', 'I did' or 'I was'. What is this 'I'? What am I? It is not difficult to see that the body is not 'I'. It did not exist before birth and will not survive death. In deep sleep there is no body-consciousness. Even while waking I am aware that I have the body and therefore I cannot be the body. What is more difficult is to see that the mind or ego is not 'I'. It springs from ignorance, being a superimposition on the Self. The I-thought is the first thought to arise, and the mind is the same as the ego. Ordinarily it goes out through the sense-channels and apprehends and enjoys external objects, but it must be made to turn inwards and enquire into the nature and source of itself. This can only be done with a still mind. This enquiry "is the only method of putting an end to all misery and ushering in supreme Beatitude. Whatever may be said and however phrased, this is the whole truth in a nutshell."[4]

Explaining the technique of Self-enquiry, the Maharshi says: "By steady and continuous investigation into the nature of the mind, the mind is transformed into that to which the 'I' refers;

1 - These preliminary exercises of *karma yoga, bhakti yoga* and *raja yoga* are helpful but not essential; the Maharshi was quite definite that the path of Self-enquiry as taught by him was all-sufficient and would accomplish also the tasks here assigned to preliminary yogas. (Editor).

2 - For an account of this see *Ramana Maharshi and the Path of Self-Knowledge*, Ch, 2, by Arthur Osborne, Rider & Co,, London.

3 - They are all contained in *The Collected Works of Rarnana Maharshi* published in London by Messrs. Rider & Co., and at Tiruvannamalai by Sri Ramanasramam.

4 - From *Self-Enquiry*, in *The Collected Works*.

and that is in fact the Self."[5] He also instructed people to probe and find out where the I-thought arises. When the enquiry is persisted in it transpires that the ego dissolves in the Self which is the Heart (*hridayam*). It is true that the mind often gets distracted on the way and strays outwards, but every time this happens it must be brought back to the enquiry into its nature. This process has to continue till it subsides into its Source, the Self. For this there is no other means so effective as Self-enquiry. Other means such as breath-control and meditation for mind-control may lead to a temporary subsidence of the mind but not to final Liberation. It will rise up again.

On the path of Self-enquiry it is admittedly the mind that investigates, but this self-investigation annihilates it and finally it gets destroyed, just as the stick used to stir a funeral pyre is itself finally burnt. This is the state of Liberation in which it is realized that there is no mind at all. What appeared to be the mind is really the Self the Self manifest as 'I-I'. This is *aham sphurana*, *prajnana*, self-manifestation, wisdom.

The Maharshi's most compact and compendious, and indeed scriptural, exposition of the path of knowledge and the truth of Advaita is his *Forty Verses on Reality, Ulladu Narpadu*. It explains that the mind consists of thoughts, of which the first to arise is 'I'. The discipline prescribed is to enquire with a keen mind whence this 'I' arises (verse 23). To say that the 'I' arises means that the Self and the not-self are fastened in a knot which is called technically 'superimposition' or 'nescience'. Bondage, soul, subtle body, egoity, transmigration, mind, all mean the same (24) They are the I-thought or ego functioning in various ways. So long as it dwells in the body it acts, experiences and enjoys; on leaving the body it finds another. But when its nature is investigated it takes to flight and turns out to be devoid of substance (25), The ego is the prop of all appearances. If the ego is all else is; if the ego is not nothing else is. The ego is all. So when the ego is investigated and its unreality perceived all phenomena are given up (26). When, through enquiry, the state where the ego does not rise up is reached, there is the non-dual Self. When the ego is lost the Self is gained (27). One should dive into oneself, with senses and mind controlled, and find the place whence the 'I' rises in order to recover the Self, as one would dive into water to get back some precious jewel that had fallen into it (28). Verbal repetition of the word 'I' is not the enquiry, nor is meditation 'I am not this, I am that'; this may help but the actual enquiry is the direct path. It is to be done with the mind turned inwards (29). Through the enquiry the mind reaches the Heart, which is only another name for the Self, and there the pseudo-I sinks crestfallen and the real 'I', the Self, shines of its own accord. This real I is not an object to be seen or realized; it is the plenary Reality (30). The destruction of the ego through Self-enquiry and the gaining of Self-awareness is the only achievement; there is nothing else to be accomplished. Pure Self-awareness is perfection (31). This is the realization that one always is and was the Self and that there is no other Reality (32).

It is useless to indulge in metaphysical speculation about Reality. "Does anything exist or not? Has Reality form or is it formless? Is it one, two or neither? These are questions engendered by ignorance" (34). Similarly philosophical questions about time and space, the world and God, free will and predestination, are powerless to lead us out of our state of ignorance. When such questions occur the enquirer should turn to the basic question: to whom do they occur? One must question the questioner. When the questioner is known there will be no questions left to ask or answer.

To seek the eternally achieved Self and abide in it is the true achievement. Delusion and the misery born of it disappear once one is established

in the natural state of the Self. The Self is not something to be newly realized; in fact the very expression 'Realization' is inapt, for the real does not need to be 'realized'. The term 'Realization' has to be understood in a figurative sense only. The truth is that there is no plurality at all: from the standpoint of the Absolute there is neither bondage nor release; there is no one bound and no one to be released. All that is is the non-dual Self.

This is the theme of *Ulladu Narpadu*, a tremendous poem proclaiming the Ultimate Reality and the path to its Realization.

In the later years at Sri Ramanasramam there used to be a daily stream of visitors and spiritual aspirants seeking to have their doubts clarified and difficulties removed by putting questions to Sri Ramana Maharshi. Some of the talks that ensued were recorded by competent resident devotees. The largest such compendium which has been preserved and published is *Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi*.[6] Questions about the path and the goal come up constantly and the Master's answers are always from the standpoint of Advaita-experience.

Again and again he stresses (like Gaudapada and Shankara and other ancient Masters) that Perfection, *Moksha*, is not anything new to be acquired. "Realization is our nature. It is not anything new to be gained. What is new cannot be eternal" (p. 455). "You do not acquire happiness; your very nature is happiness. Bliss is not newly earned. All that is to be done is to remove unhappiness " (302).

Ajnana (ignorance) is the cause of bondage; and *ajnana* is unreal. The world of duality is an illusory projection of *ajnana*. When the unreality of *ajnana* is realized the eternal *Jnana*, Knowledge, shines of itself. "To know that there never was ignorance is the goal of all spiritual teachings. Ignorance must be of one who is aware. Awareness is *jnana* and *jnana* is eternal and natural. So *ajnana* is unnatural and unreal" (298).

A mental support to Self-enquiry, though it cannot be the enquiry itself, is to analyse the three states of experience: waking, dream and deep sleep. This is also referred to in the *Mandukya Upanishad* and by Gaudapada in his *Karika*. The Maharshi explains that there is no real difference between the waking and dream states and that both are unreal from the standpoint of the Absolute. The state of deep sleep shows that 'I' and the world are not real (in the sense of permanent) since they appear only in the waking and dream states. "How does sleep differ from the other two states? In sleep there are no thoughts, whereas in the other two states there are. Therefore thoughts must be the origin of 'I' and the world. What are they? They cannot be natural (in the sense of permanent) or they could not appear at one moment and disappear at another. Where do they come from? They must be admitted to have an ever-present and invariable source. It must be the eternal state … that from which all beings come forth, that in which they remain and that into which they resolve" (726).

The accepted rule is: that which is constant in variable things is real, that which is inconstant is unreal. 'I' and the world are inconstant; the Self alone is constant. In the waking and dream states our bodies attach themselves to us and we are afflicted by the I-am-the-body idea. "Because the body exists you say that it was born and will die, and then you transfer the idea to the Self, saying that you are born and will die. In fact you remain without the body in sleep, but now you remain with it. The Self can remain without the body but the body cannot exist apart from the Self. The 'I-am-the-body' thought is ignorance; that the body does not exist apart from the Self is knowledge ... So long as there is the sense of separation there will be afflicting thoughts. If the original source is regained and the sense of separation put an end to, there is peace" (439).

5 - *Ibid*.

6 - Published by Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai.

THE FORTY VERSES ON REALITY

Advaita, non-duality, Identity, is the supreme doctrine. *Jnana marga*, the path of knowledge, is the approach to it: Self-enquiry, 'Who am I?', is the technique Bhagavan taught for this path. There is no more profound and comprehensive statement of it than his 'Forty Verses on Reality' which are here given.

INVOCATORY

i. If Reality did not exist, could there be any knowledge of existence? Free from all thoughts, Reality abides in the Heart, the Source of all thoughts. It is, therefore, called the Heart. How then is one to contemplate it? To be as it is in the Heart, is Its contemplation.

ii. Those who know intense fear of death seek refuge only at the feet of the Lord Who has neither death nor birth. Dead to themselves and their possessions, can the thought of death occur to them again? Deathless are they.

* * * *

1. From our perception of the world there follows acceptance of a unique First Principle possessing various powers. Pictures of name and form, the person who sees, the screen on which he sees, and the light by which he sees: he himself is all of these.

2. All religions postulate the three fundamentals, the world, the soul, and God, but it is only the one Reality that manifests Itself as these three. One can say, 'The three are really three' only so long as the ego lasts. Therefore, to inhere in one's own Being, where the 'I', or ego, is dead, is the perfect State.

3. 'The world is real.' 'No, it, is a mere illusory appearance.' 'The world is conscious.' 'No.' 'The world is happiness.' 'No.' What use is it to argue thus? That State is agreeable to all, wherein, having given up the objective outlook, one knows one's Self and loses all notions either of unity or duality, of oneself and the ego.

4. If one has form oneself, the world and God also will appear to have form, but if one is formless, who is it that sees those forms, and how? Without the eye can any object be seen? The seeing Self is the Eye, and that Eye is the Eye of Infinity.

5. The body is a form composed of the five-fold sheath; therefore, all the five sheaths are implied in the term, body. Apart from the body does the world exist? Has anyone seen the world without the body?

6. The world is nothing more than an embodiment of the objects perceived by the five sense-organs. Since, through these five sense-organs, a single mind perceives the world, the world is nothing but the mind. Apart from the mind can there be a world?

7. Although the world and knowledge thereof rise and set together it is by knowledge alone that the world is made apparent. That Perfection wherein the world and knowledge thereof rise and set, and which shines without rising and setting, is alone the Reality.

8. Under whatever name and form one may worship the Absolute Reality, it is only a means for realizing It without name and form. That alone is true realization, wherein one knows oneself in relation to that Reality, attains peace and realizes one's identity with it.

9. The duality of subject and object and trinity of seer, sight, and seen can exist only if supported by the One. If one turns inward in search of that One Reality they fall away. Those who see this are those who see Wisdom. They are never in doubt.

10. Ordinary knowledge is always accompanied by ignorance, and ignorance by knowledge; the only true Knowledge is that by which one knows the Self through enquiring whose is the knowledge and ignorance.

11. Is it not, rather, ignorance to know all else without knowing oneself, the knower? As soon as one knows the Self, which is the substratum of knowledge and ignorance, knowledge and ignorance perish.

12. That alone is true Knowledge which is neither knowledge nor ignorance. What is known is not true Knowledge. Since the Self shines with nothing else to know or to make known, It alone is Knowledge. It is not a void.

13. The Self, which is Knowledge, is the only Reality. Knowledge of multiplicity is false knowledge. This false knowledge, which is really ignorance, cannot exist apart from the Self, which is Knowledge-Reality. The variety of gold ornaments is unreal, since none of them can exist without the gold of which they are all made.

14. If the first person, I, exists, then the second and third persons, you and he, will also exist. By enquiring into the nature of the I, the I perishes. With it 'you' and 'he' also perish. The resultant state, which shines as Absolute Being, is one's own natural state, the Self.

15. Only with reference to the present can the past and the future exist. They too, while current, are the present. To try to determine the nature of the past and the future while ignoring the present is like trying to count without the unit.

16. Apart, from us where is time and where is space? If we are bodies, we are involved in time and space, but are we? We are one and identical now, then, and forever, here, and everywhere. Therefore we, timeless, and spaceless Being, alone are.

17. To those who have not realized the Self, as well as to those who have, the word 'I' refers to the body, but with this difference, that for those who have not realized, the 'I' is confined to the body whereas for those who have realized the Self within the body the 'I' shines as the limitless Self.

18. To those who have not realized (the Self) as well as to those who have the world is real. But to those who have not realized, Truth is adapted to the measure of the world, whereas to those that have, Truth shines as the Formless Perfection, and as the Substratum of the world. This is all the difference between them.

19. Only those who have no knowledge of the Source of destiny and free-will dispute as to which of them prevails. They that know the Self as the one Source of destiny and free-will are free from both. Will they again get entangled in them?

20. He who sees God without seeing the Self sees only a mental image. They say that he who sees the Self sees God. He who, having completely lost the ego, sees the Self, has found God, because the Self does not exist apart from God.

21. What is the Truth of the scriptures which declare that if one sees the Self one sees God? How can one see one's Self? If, since one is a single being, one cannot see one's Self, how can one see God? Only by becoming a prey to Him.

22. The Divine gives light to the mind and shines within it. Except by turning the mind inward and fixing it in the Divine, there is no other way to know Him through the mind.

23. The body does not say 'I'. No one will argue that even in deep sleep the 'I' ceases to exist. Once the 'I' emerges, all else emerges. With a keen mind enquire whence this 'I' emerges.

24. This inert body does not say 'I'. Reality-Consciousness does not emerge. Between the two, and limited to the measure of the body, something emerges as 'I'. It is this that is known as *Chit-jada-granthi* (the knot between the Conscious and the inert), and also as bondage, soul, subtle-body, ego, *samsara*, mind, and so forth.

25. It. comes into being equipped with a form, and as long as it retains a form it endures. Having a form, it feeds and grows big. But if you investigate it this evil spirit, which has no form of its own, relinquishes its grip on form and takes to flight.

26. If the ego is, everything else also is. If the ego is not, nothing else is. Indeed, the ego is all. Therefore the enquiry as to what this ego is, is the only way of giving up everything.

27. The State of non-emergence of 'I' is the state of being THAT. Without questing for that State of the non-emergence of 'I' and attaining It, how can

one accomplish one's own extinction, from which the 'I' does not revive? Without that attainment how is it possible to abide in one's true State, where one is THAT?

28. Just as a man would dive in order to get something that had fallen into the water, so one should dive into oneself, with a keen one-pointed mind, controlling speech and breath, and find the place whence the 'I' originates.

29. The only enquiry leading to Self-realization is seeking the Source of the 'I' with in-turned mind and without uttering the word 'I'. Meditation on 'I am not this; I am That' may be an aid to the enquiry but it cannot be the enquiry.

30. If one enquires 'Who am I?' within the mind, the individual 'I' falls down abashed as soon as one reaches the Heart and immediately Reality manifests itself spontaneously as 'I-I'. Although it reveals itself as 'I', it is not the ego but the Perfect Being, the Absolute Self.

31. For Him who is immersed in the bliss of the Self, arising from the extinction of the ego, what remains to be accomplished? He is not aware of anything (as) other than the Self. Who can apprehend his State?

32. Although the scriptures proclaim 'Thou art That', it is only a sign of weakness of mind to meditate 'I am That, not this', because you are eternally That. What has to be done is to investigate what one really is and remain That.

33. It is ridiculous to say either 'I have not realized the Self' or 'I have realized the Self'; are there two selves, for one to be the object of the other's realization? It is a truth within the experience of everyone that there is only one Self.

34. It is due to illusion born of ignorance that men fail to recognise That which is always and for everybody the inherent Reality dwelling in its natural Heart-centre and to abide in it, and that instead they argue that it exists or does not exist, that it has form or has not form, or is non-dual or dual.

35. To seek and abide in the Reality that is always attained, is the only Attainment. All other attainments (*siddhis*) are such as are acquired in dreams. Can they appear real to someone who has woken up from sleep? Can they that are established in the Reality and are free from *maya*, be deluded by them?

36. Only if the thought 'I am the body' occurs will the meditation 'I am not this, I am That', help one to abide as That. Why should we for ever be thinking, 'I am That'? Is it necessary for man to go on thinking 'I am a man'? Are we not always That?

37. The contention, 'Dualism during practice, non-dualism on Attainment', is also false. While one is anxiously searching, as well as when one has found one's Self, who else is one but the tenth man?[1]

38. As long as a man is the doer, he also reaps the fruit of his deeds, but, as soon as he realizes the Self through enquiry as to who is the doer his sense of being the doer falls away and the triple karma[2] is ended. This is the state of eternal Liberation.

39. Only so long as one considers oneself bound, do thoughts of bondage and Liberation continue. When one enquires who is bound the Self is realized, eternally attained, and eternally free. When thought of bondage comes to an end, can thought of Liberation survive?

40. If it is said, that Liberation is of three kinds, with form or without form or with and without form, then let me tell you that the extinction of three forms of Liberation is the only true Liberation.

1 - This refers to a traditional story of a party of ten fools who were travelling together. They had to cross a river and on reaching the other shore wanted to check up whether all of them had got safely across. Each one counted in turn, but each one counted the nine others and forgot himself. So they thought the tenth man had been drowned and began to mourn him. Just then a traveller came past and asked them what was the matter. He at once saw the cause of their mistake and in order to convince them he made them walk past him one by one, giving each one a blow as he passed and telling them to count the strokes.

2 - *Sanchita, Agami* and *Prarabdha*.

THE MAHARSHI AND THE PATH OF DEVOTION[1]

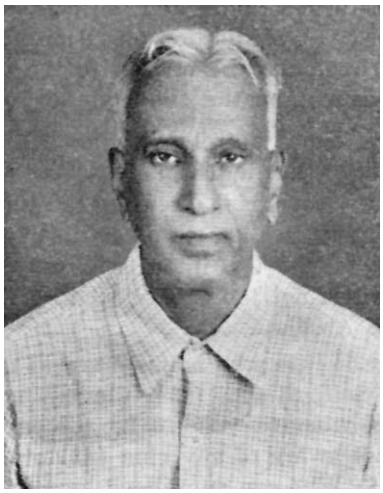
By A. Devaraja Mudaliar

Devaraja Mudaliar is one of the senior-most of Bhagavan's devotees. A lawyer by profession, he is precise in observation and clear in expression and was therefore often called upon by Bhagavan to act as interpreter in answering the questions of Western visitors. For some years he kept an Ashram diary which has been published in two volumes under the title 'Day by Day with Bhagavan'. He has also written 'My Recollections of Bhagavan Sri Ramana'. Both books are published by the Ashram. The above account might make him appear an intellectual, but he is at heart a pure bhakta, as the following article shows.

Not only in India but in all religions the path of devotion or surrender has been prized as a method for attaining to God or winning Liberation. The four main paths recommended in Hinduism are *karma, bhakti, yoga* and *jnana* — action, devotion, yogic development and knowledge; and it is held that man's business in life is to try to reach God by one or more of them. The above four include many varied techniques which different people practise in the hope of evolving spiritually and attaining perfection. Bhagavan Ramana has often said that all of them are good and all are difficult, only according to the temperament and ability of an aspirant one or another may appeal to him most and look easiest. He also said that whatever method one may practise one must eventually attain to *Jnana*, that is to Divine Knowledge of the Self, the Absolute.

It is well known that Bhagavan taught that the shortest and most direct way to attain Self-realization is to enquire who this 'I' or ego to which we refer at every turn, as 'I think', 'I want', 'I do', etc., really is and whence it arises. This 'I' is another name for the mind, which again is nothing but a bundle of thoughts. He taught that if, without allowing the mind to go outwards and indulge in thoughts of the world, we continuously and resolutely turn it back on itself to find the source whence it springs it will take us to the Self. This method is known as *vichara* or enquiry and comes under the heading of *jnana marga*.

It is not so well known, however, that Bhagavan was himself as much a *bhakta* as a *jnani*, a man of



devotion as of knowledge. I could write at length on this subject, but it is hardly necessary. A perusal of his 'Five Hymns to Arunachala'[2] is enough to prove what a sincere and ardent devotee he was. What I wish to bring out here is that, when commending Self-enquiry and telling his questioner to ask himself 'Who am I?', Bhagavan often ended by saying: "If you say you have not the strength to do this, throw yourself on the one great Power which looks after all." I have heard him say this not once but a number of times. Even in his earliest book, that great little work 'Who am I?', he says: "God is prepared to take up all burdens, however heavy. Why not throw all your burdens also on

1 - *Bhakti marga* is known variously as the path of devotion, submission or surrender.

2 - See *The Collected Works of Ramana Maharshi*, Rider & Co., London and Sri Ramanasramam, Tiruvannamalai.

Him and be free? Don't be foolish like the passenger in a railway train who carries his bag on his lap or shoulders instead of putting it on the rack." I have never heard him commend in this way, of his own accord, either *karma marga* or yoga.

In this connection, I would like to quote a stanza from a Tamil poem by the late Sivaprakasam Pillai,[3] one of Bhagavan's oldest devotees and one whose authority to speak on Bhagavan's teachings it would be hard to dispute. "To all you give only the instruction: 'Ponder and find out who you are'. If, after that, anyone still submissively asks for more you say as your final advice: 'There is a power (*shakti*) which moves you and me and all; surrender your ego at the feet of that Mother.'"

Not only many ancient saints of our land, but even recent ones, such as Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Swami Ramdas, to mention only two, have recommended the *bhakti* path of surrender. The *Puranas* have even gone further and laid down that for this spiritually dark age, the *kali yuga*, the path of *bhakti* is the best suited and the easiest to practise. Leave everything to God, throw yourself at His feet and just keep calling on His Name always. You need not do anything else. You will be saved. That is what they say.

But whatever any one may say, however easy at first sight the method may seem, once you begin to practise it earnestly you will find surrender, real and complete surrender, surrender without any mental reservations whatsoever, surrender to accept with joy, as coming from God, everything that befalls you, good, bad and indifferent, is a very hard thing indeed. But we are told that surrender will not work unless it is complete. There are two stories, one from the great epic, the *Mahabharata*, and the other told by Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, that illustrate this. The first is that when Draupadi was left defenceless, her mighty husbands having by then lost their freedom, and the evil Duryodhana and his friends tried to disrobe her in court, she prayed to Sri Krishna as her last and only refuge; but help did not come from him until she had given up the natural and almost involuntary effort to hold on to her sari and prevent it from being removed from her waist. So long as she struggled to help herself, Divine Grace could not flow to help her. The story told by Ramakrishna is even more forceful. Someone picked a quarrel with a laundryman when he was washing clothes and began to beat him. The laundryman cried out to Vishnu for help. Vishnu was at that time disporting himself in paradise with his consort Lakshmi. On hearing the piteous cry of the laundryman he rose and started running towards the earth. A moment later, however, Lakshmi saw him strolling back in a leisurely way. "What is the matter?" she asked. "Why did you rush off so suddenly? And why do you now come back in no hurry?"

The Lord thereupon explained: "A devotee was beaten and prayed to me for help and protection, so I had to run to his rescue. But before I got there he took up a stick to defend himself, so why should 1 bother?"

This is what Bhagavan taught, that surrender must be complete or it will not be effective. It is clearly taught in our religious literature that before you can expect any progress in your spiritual state you must sacrifice or offer all you have, body, possessions and soul, to the Guru. We must also remember that God, Guru and Self are equated. Such surrender has been taught as a sure and sufficient means for the attainment of our spiritual goal, call it *Mukti*, *Moksha*, *Nirvana*, Liberation or what you will. Submission to the will of Allah is the basic command of Islam. Jesus said: "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Krishna said: "Abandon all your duties and take

3 - For whom see *Ramana Maharshi and the Path of Self-Knowledge*, pp. 85-90, by Arthur Osborne, Rider & Co., London.

refuge in Me alone. I will free you from all sins. Do not grieve."

Sri Krishna definitely affirmed that if a man takes refuge at His feet and surrenders completely he need not do anything else, he need not bother about any other duties. This path of utter devotion and self-surrender has been proclaimed and followed by many a *bhakta* throughout India, especially by the great Saivite and Vaishnavite poet-saints of the Tamil land, by Tukaram, Eknath, Namdev and others in Maharashtra, and Chaitanya in Bengal. The Vaishnavites in particular have attached great importance to the path of surrender as taught in the 'Charana sloka', as it is called, of the *Bhagavad Gita*, which I have already quoted. They call this surrender '*Prapathi*' and have developed its doctrine in great detail, showing how far-reaching its ramifications can be.

I shall refer only to one or two aspects of this '*Prapathi*' path which especially appeal to me. They say, for instance, that while in other paths God is the Goal and various other things are used as means, on the path of surrender both the means and the end are God. Another thing they say is that whereas on any other path more than one means may be employed and may even be necessary, on the path of surrender no other means are necessary or even admissible, for that would imply that your faith in surrender was not complete, and therefore your surrender itself was not. One illustration they quote for this argument is that in the *Ramayana* Indrajit used a powerful weapon called '*Brahma Asthra*' with whose divine power he bound Hanuman hand and foot. The Rakshasas, however, seeking to make doubly sure, began to bind him also with ropes and chains, whereupon the divine weapon ceased to act owing to their lack of faith in it. To throw oneself completely on God, secure in His love and mercy and power, and not to dream of being able to do anything except by His Grace and Will is the *Prapathi* method taught by the Vaishnavites, and it has great value for the really ardent devotee.

Even recent saints have, in their great mercy, told some lucky disciples that if they surrendered completely to the Guru they need not do anything else. Once when Girish Chandra Ghosh wept before Ramakrishna and declared that he could not follow any discipline, however simple or short, Ramakrishna was pleased to tell him: "Then give me power of attorney", meaning: 'Surrender and I will do the rest!'

I once told Bhagavan: "I am another Girish. You must save me yourself. Every saint must have a Girish."

Bhagavan replied But *he* gave power of attorney."

"I too have surrendered to the extent that I am capable of," I said: "What more can I do?"

Bhagavan said nothing.

It was not Bhagavan's way to say, "Surrender and I will look after you." However, the following incident is significant in that regard. About a year before Bhagavan left the body I said to him one afternoon: "I am going to sing Bhagavan three stanzas from a poem by Sivaprakasam Pillai because they express what I want to say better than I could." I then sang them. Their meaning is: "I have not followed your teaching or instructions; but is it proper for a Guru to get disgusted with his devotee as an incorrigible beast and to give him up? If you let me go my own way like this, what is to happen to me? I shall not reform and you will not correct or change me. Have I any other help in this or the other world except you, my Lord? What, then, is your idea" Is this right behaviour for you?"

Bhagavan did not immediately reply, which caused me some disappointment. After a minute or two he said: "Whether I do anything or not, your business is only to surrender and keep still."

Some friends have told me that I may take this to mean: "Don't worry; I know what to do

and will do it." On the other hand, it may only mean: "If you really surrender you have no right to complain; so if a devotee complains it is a sign that he has not surrendered." In any case, I prefer to be an optimist and believe that, however incomplete my surrender may be, so long as his Grace is complete he will look after me all right.

I recently read in '*Bhavan's Journal*' some of the teachings of Swami Nityananda who lived in Vajreswari for about thirty years and died a few years ago. A disciple asked him: "What should I do?" and he replied: "You need not do anything." I take that to mean anything except surrender and leave everything to the Guru.

Intellectuals may feel tempted to look down on the path of *bhakti*, but I think I have written enough to show that such an attitude is not justified. I will finish with one more story to illustrate this. Tota Puri was an Advaitin whom Ramakrishna took as his guru, having already had a *tantric* guru. He had no patience with people worshipping a Personal God and used to make fun of Ramakrishna for constantly speaking of Kali and worshipping her and calling her 'Mother'. He had never previously known ill health, when he was suddenly attacked by a severe and painful form of dysentery. It was so bad that after some days he decided to drown himself in the Ganges. He entered the river and walked towards the opposite bank, perhaps half a mile or so, only to find that the water never got more than knee-deep. Finally Kali, Ramakrishna's 'Mother', appeared before him and thus miraculously converted him.

Let no humble devotee, therefore, feel discouraged if some philosopher or even saint condemns the path of surrender. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. It has worked and produced results all over the world, not only with *bhaktas* in India, but with Sufis in Persia and mystics both in the East and West. Above all, Sri Krishna has held out the promise that He will save all who come to Him and take refuge at His feet. Let us not doubt, but let us surrender and achieve eternal Peace and Bliss.

THE WORLD

By A. Rao

The world's an extension of you
Nothing outside.
Let what will betide
Only ensue
The inner self of you,
For this is true.

For a day you wear
The garb of earth and air,
Knowledge confined
To mortal mind:
Only a spell to break,
A dream from which to wake.

So long it lasts,
Don't think you originate
The play of fate
Its shadow casts.
Be a glass polished bright
To reflect the Light.

But Hui Neng said
There is no glass.
Let the ego-self be dead,
This will come to pass.
Then all fate's teeth are drawn
In that glad dawn.

THE MARITAL GARLAND OF LETTERS

There could be no better proof that the path of devotion is compatible with Knowledge than Bhagavan's 'Marital Garland of Letters to Sri Arunachala'. He composed it while he was still a young man living in a cave on Arunachala before his Ashram was founded. Some of his disciples used to go into town daily to beg their food and asked him for a song to sing as they went. He replied at first that there were plenty of songs left by the classical Tamil poet-saints that could be used, but they persisted. Some days later he walked round Arunachala, composing the 'Marital Garland' as he went. It is said that tears of ecstatic ardour streamed down his face as he composed it. Certainly it is one of the supreme symbolical love poems of all ages and all religions. It has always remained the emotional treasure of his devotees. as the 'Forty Verses' is their doctrinal foundation. Spontaneously they burst into the singing of it at the last moment when breath was leaving his body, so that it was the last earthly sound he heard.

INVOCATION

Gracious Ganapati![1] with Thy (loving) hand bless me, that I may make this a marital garland of letters worthy of Sri Arunachala, the Bridegroom!

REFRAIN

Arunachala Shiva! Arunachala Shiva!
Arunachala Shiva! Arunachala!
Arunachala Shiva! Arunachala Shiva!
Arunachala Shiva! Arunachala!

1. Arunachala! Thou dost root out the ego of those who meditate on Thee in the heart, Oh Arunachala!

2. May Thou and I be one and inseparable like *Alagu* and *Sundara*,[2] Oh Arunachala!

3. Entering (my) home and luring me (to Thine) why didst Thou keep me prisoner in Thy heart's cavern. Oh Arunachala?

4. Was it for Thy pleasure or for my sake Thou didst win me? If now Thou turn me away, the world will blame Thee, Oh Arunachala!

5. Escape this blame! Why didst Thou then recall Thyself to me? How can I leave Thee now, Oh Arunachala!

6. Kinder far art Thou than one's own mother. Is this then Thy all-kindness, Oh Arunachala?

7. Sit firmly in my mind lest it elude Thee, Oh Arunachala!

8. Display Thy beauty, for the fickle mind to see Thee for ever and to rest (in peace), Oh Arunachala!

9. After abducting me if now Thou dost not embrace me, where is Thy chivalry, Oh Arunachala?

10. Does it become Thee thus to sleep when I am outraged by others, Oh Arunachala?

11. Even when the thieves of the five senses break in upon me, art Thou not still in my heart, Oh Arunachala!

1 - Another name for Lord Ganesha.

2 - The Tamil word *alagu* and Sanskrit word *sundara* have the same meaning: 'beauty'. *Alagu* and *Sundara* were also the names of Sri Ramana's mother and father.

12. One art Thou without a second; who then could dare elude Thee and come in? This is only Thy jugglery, Oh Arunachala!

13. Significance of OM unrivalled — unsurpassed! Who can comprehend Thee, Oh Arunachala?

14. As (Universal) Mother, it is Thy duty to dispense Thy Grace and save me, Oh Arunachala!

15. Who can ever find Thee? The Eye of the eye art Thou, and without eyes Thou seest, Oh Arunachala!

16. As a lode-stone attracts iron, magnetising it and holding it fast, so do Thou to me, Oh Arunachala!

17. (Unmoving) Hill, melting into a Sea of Grace, have mercy (on me) I pray, Oh Arunachala!

18. Fiery Gem, shining in all directions, do Thou burn up my dross, Oh Arunachala!

19. Shine as my Guru, making me free from faults and worthy of Thy Grace, Oh Arunachala!

20. Save me from the cruel snares of fascinating women and honour me with union with Thyself, Oh Arunachala!

21. Though I beg, Thou art callous and dost not condescend. I pray Thee! say to me 'Fear not' Oh Arunachala!

22. Unasked Thou givest; this is Thy imperishable fame. Do not belie Thy name, Oh Arunachala!

23. Sweet fruit within my hands, let me be mad with ecstasy, drunk with the Bliss of Thy Essence, Oh Arunachala!

24. Blazoned as the Devourer of Thy votaries, how can I survive who have embraced Thee, Oh Arunachala?

25. Thou, unruffled by anger! What crime has marked me off (for Thy wrath); Oh Arunachala?

26. Glorious Mountain of Love, celebrated by Gautama[3], rule me with Thy gracious glance, Oh Arunachala!

27. Dazzling Sun that swallowest up all the universe in Thy rays, by Thy Light open the lotus of my heart I pray, Oh Arunachala!

28. I came to feed on Thee, but Thou hast fed on me; now there is Peace, Oh Arunachala!

29. O Moon of Grace, with Thy (cool) rays as hands, open (within me) the ambrosial orifice and let my heart rejoice, Oh Arunachala!

30. Tear off these robes, expose me naked, then robe me with Thy Love, Oh Arunachala!

31. There (in the heart) rest quiet! Let the sea of joy surge, speech and feeling cease, Oh Arunachala!

32. Do not continue to deceive and prove me; disclose instead Thy Transcendental Self, Oh Arunachala!

33. Vouchsafe the knowledge of Eternal Life that I may learn the glorious Primal Wisdom, and shun the delusion of this world, Oh Arunachala!

34. Unless Thou embrace me, I shall melt away in tears of anguish, Oh Arunachala!

35. If spurned by Thee, alas! what rests for me but the torment of my *prarabdha*?[4] What hope is left for me, Oh Arunachala?

36. In silence Thou saidst, 'Stay silent!' and Thyself stood silent, O Arunachala![5]

37. Happiness lies in peaceful repose enjoyed when resting in the Self. Beyond speech indeed is Thy prowess resting in the Self. Beyond speech indeed is This my State, Oh Arunachala!

38. Sun! Thou didst sally forth and illusion was

3 - The Gautama here referred to is not the Buddha but a Hindu Sage of that name who dwelt at Arunachala, for mention of whom see 'The Mythology of Arunachala' by T. K. S. in our issue of July 1964. P. 143.

4 - *Prarabdha* is the part of destiny due to past actions (karmas) which bears fruit in the present birth.

5 - Silence is the highest and most perfect form of instruction which the Guru can give, for by its nature it is closest to the essential object of such instruction, which is the realization by the disciple of the incommunicable and inexpressible Absolute.

ended. Then didst Thou shine motionless (alone), Oh Arunachala!

39. (A dog can scent out its master), am I then worse than a dog? Steadfastly will I seek Thee and regain Thee, Oh Arunachala!

40. Grant me wisdom, I beseech Thee, so that I may not pine for love of Thee in ignorance, Oh Arunachala!

41. (In sunlight the lotus blossoms), how then couldst Thou, the Sun of suns, hover before me like a flower bee, saying 'Thou are not yet in blossom,' Oh Arunachala?

42. 'Thou hast realized the Self even without knowing that it was the Truth. It is the Truth Itself!' Speak (thus if it be so), Oh Arunachala!

43. Reveal Thyself! Thou only art Reality, Oh Arunachala!

44. 'Look within, ever seeking the Self with the inner eye, then will, (It) be found.' Thus didst Thou direct me, beloved Arunachala!

45. Weak though my effort was, by Thy Grace I gained the Self, Oh Arunachala!

46. What value has this birth without Knowledge born of realization? It is not even worth speaking about, Oh Arunachala!

47. I, by Thy Grace, am sunk in Thy Self, wherein merge only those divested of their minds and thus made pure, Oh Arunachala!

48. When I took shelter under Thee as my One God, Thou didst destroy me altogether, Oh Arunachala!

49. Treasure of benign and holy Grace found without seeking, steady my wandering mind, Oh Arunachala!

50. On seeking Thy Real Self with courage, my raft capsized and the waters came over me. Have mercy on me Arunachala!

51. Enfold me body to body, limb to limb, or I am lost, Oh Arunachala!

52. Oh Undefiled, abide Thou in my heart so that there may be everlasting joy, Arunachala!

53. Mock me not, who seek Thy protection! Adorn me with Thy Grace and then regard me, Oh Arunachala!

54. Does it not shame Thee to stand there like a post, (leaving me) to find Thee by myself, Oh Arunachala?

55. Rain Thy Mercy on me ere Thy Knowledge burn me to ashes, Oh Arunachala!

56. Unite with me to destroy (our separate identities as) Thou and me, and bless me with the state of ever-vibrant joy, Oh Arunachala!

57. When will waves of thought cease to rise? When shall I reach Thee, subtler than the subtle ether, Oh Arunachala!

58. I am a simpleton devoid of learning. Do Thou dispel illusion, Oh Arunachala!

59. When I melted away and entered Thee, my Refuge, (I found) Thee standing naked, Oh Arunachala!

60. In my unloving self Thou didst create a passion for Thee, therefore forsake me not, Oh Arunachala!

61. Fruit shrivelled and spoilt is worthless, take and enjoy it ripe, Oh Arunachala!

62. Hast Thou not bartered cunningly Thyself for me? Oh, Thou art death to me, Arunachala!

63. Regard me! Take thought of me, Touch me![6] Mature me! Make me one with Thee, Oh Arunachala!

64. Grant me Thy Grace ere the poison of delusion grips me and, rising to my head, kills me, Oh Arunachala!

65. Thyself regard me and dispel illusion! Unless Thou do so who can intercede with Grace Itself made manifest Oh Arunachala!

66. With madness for Thee hast Thou freed me of madness (for the world); grant me now the cure of all madness, Oh Arunachala!

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6 - Regard me! Take thought of me! Touch me! refer respectively to the three modes of initiation, by look, by thought, and by touch.

67. Fearless I seek Thee, Fearlessness Itself! How canst Thou fear to take me, Oh Arunachala!

68. Where is (my) ignorance or (Thy) Wisdom, if I am blessed with union to Thee, Oh Arunachala!

69. Espouse me, I beseech Thee, and let this mind, now wedded to the world, be wedded to Perfection, Oh Arunachala!

70. Mere thought of Thee has drawn me to Thee, and who can gauge Thy Glory (in Itself), Oh, Arunachala?

71. Thou hast possessed me, unexorcizable Spirit! and made me mad (for Thee), that I may cease to be a ghost (wandering the world), Oh Arunachala!

72. Be Thou my stay and my support lest I droop helpless like a tender creeper, Oh Arunachala!

73. Thou didst benumb (my faculties) with stupefying powder,[7] then rob me of my understanding and reveal the Knowledge of Thy Self, Oh Arunachala!

74. Show me the warfare of Thy Grace, in the Open Field where there is no coming and going, Oh Arunachala!

75. Unattached to the physical frame composed of the (five) elements, let me for ever repose happy in the sight of Thy Splendour, Oh Arunachala!

76. Thou hast administered the medicine of confusion to me, so must I be confounded! Shine Thou as Grace, the cure of all confusion, Oh Arunachala!

77. Shine Thou selfless, sapping the pride of those who boast of their free-will, Oh Arunachala!

78. I am a fool who prays only when overwhelmed (by misery), yet disappoint me not, Oh Arunachala!

79. Guard me lest I flounder storm-tossed like a ship without helmsman, Oh Arunachala!

80. Thou hast cut the knot which bid the vision of Thy Head and Foot (the limitless Self). Mother-like, shouldst Thou not complete Thy task, Oh Arunachala![8]

81. Be not (like) a mirror held to a noseless man, but raise me (from my lowness) and embrace me, Oh Arunachala!

82. Let us embrace upon the bed of tender flowers, which is the mind, within the room of the body (or the Ultimate Truth), Oh Arunachala!

83. How is it that Thou hast become famous from Thy constant union with the poor and humble, Oh Arunachala?

84. Thou hast removed the blindness of ignorance with the unguent of Thy Grace, and made me truly Thine, Oh Arunachala!

85. Thou didst shave clean my head (and I was lost to the world),[9] then Thou didst (show Thyself) dancing in Transcendent Space, Oh Arunachala!

86. Though Thou hast loosed me from the mists of error and made me mad for Thee, why hast Thou not yet freed me from illusion; Oh Arunachala!

87. Is it true Silence to rest like a stone, inert and unexpansive, Oh Arunachala?

88. Who was it that threw mud to me for food[10] and robbed me of my livelihood, Oh Arunachala?

89. Unknown to all, stupefying me, Who was it that ravished my soul, Oh Arunachala?

90. I spoke thus to Thee, because Thou art my

7 - This verse alludes to the wandering ascetics who spirit away children for disciples, stupefying them with a pinch of powder, such as sacred ashes.

8 - The cutting of the knot which binds man to illusion implies the attainment of *nirvikalpa samadhi*; completion of the task refers to the state of *sahaja samadhi*.

9 - The parenthesis is not a mere addition to explain the implication of shaving the head, for by an alternative reading, involving the change of a single letter, these words become explicit in the text.

10 - Literally, 'Threw mud in my mouth', an expression meaning 'caused my ruin'. The deeper meaning of this verse is: 'Who was it that individualized me and robbed me of my Perfect Being?'

Lord; be not offended but come and give me happiness, Oh Arunachala!

91. Let us enjoy one another in the House of Open Space, where there is neither night nor day, Oh Arunachala![11]

92. Thou didst take aim (at me) with darts of Love and then devoured me alive, Oh Arunachala!

93. Thou art the Primal Being, whereas I count not in this nor the other world. What didst Thou gain thus by my worthless self, Oh Arunachala!

94. Dist Thou not call me in? I have come in. Now measure out for me, (my maintenance is now Thy burden). Hard is Thy lot, Oh Arunachala!

95. The moment Thou didst welcome me, didst enter into me and grant me Thy divine life, I lost my individuality, Oh Arunachala!

96. Bless me that I may die without losing hold of Thee, or miserable is (my fate), Oh Arunachala!

97. From my home Thou didst entice me, then stealing into my heart didst draw me gently into Thine, (such is) Thy Grace, Oh Arunachala!

98. I have betrayed Thy (secret) workings. Be not offended! Show me Thy Grace now openly and save me, Oh Arunachala!

99. Grant me the essence of the Vedas, which shine in the Vedanta, One without a second, Oh Arunachala!

100. Even my slanders, treat as praise and guard me for ever as Thine own, I pray, Oh Arunachala!

101. As snow in water, let me melt, as Love in Thee, Who art Love itself, Oh Arunachala!

102. I had but thought of Thee as Aruna, and lo! I was caught in the trap of Thy Grace! Can the net of Thy Grace ever fail, Oh Arunachala!

103. Watching like a spider to trap (me in the web of Thy) Grace, Thou didst entwine me and when imprisoned feed upon me, Oh Arunachala!

104. Let me be the votary of the votaries of those who hear Thy name with love, Oh Arunachala!

105. Shine Thou for ever as the loving Saviour of helpless suppliants like myself, Oh Arunachala!

106. Familiar to Thine ears are the sweet songs of votaries who melt to the very bones with love for Thee, yet let my poor strains also be acceptable, Oh Arunachala!

107. Hill of Patience, bear with my foolish words, (regarding them) as hymns of joy or as Thou please, Oh Arunachala!

108. Oh Arunachala! my Loving Lord, Throw Thy garland (about my shoulders) wearing Thyself this one (strung) by me, Arunachala!

Blessed be Arunachala! blessed be His devotees! Blessed be this Marital Garland of Letters!

11 - The allusion is to the 'cavity of the Heart' which is beyond time and space.

LIVING PHILOSOPHY

In India there is no such thing as armchair philosophy. Philosophy is not only a way of thought but also a way of life in this country. It is not born of idle curiosity, nor is it a mere intellectual game. Every philosophy here is a religion, and every religion has its philosophy. The philosopher here was not a tall and spectacled professor dictating his notes to the class or weaving cobwebs of theory in his study, but one who was moved by a deep inner urge to know the secrets of life, who lived laborious days of spiritual discipline and who saw the light by the transformation of his life.

From Sri Jaideva Singh's introduction to his text and English translation of the Pratyabhijnahridayam, published by Messrs. Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi-6.

BHAKTI MARGA IN BUDDHISM

The Meaning and Importance of Prayer

By LAMA ANAGARIKA GOVINDA
Acharya, Arya Maitreya Mandala

The Buddhist tradition inclines more to *jnana marga* and the Christian to *bhakti marga*. Nevertheless, every complete religion contains elements of both and provides scope for both types of approach. In this article the venerable author shows the very important place that prayer, a *bhakti* technique, can hold in Buddhism. It is a resume of talks delivered by him during the international religious conference of 1960 at Venice, convoked by the Cultural Centre of the Foundation Giorgio Cini, Isola di San Giorgio Maggiore. The subject of the Conference, to which representatives of the main religions of the world were invited, was 'The Experience of Prayer'.

Lama Govinda is already known to many of our readers as author of the important study '*Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*'. (Rider & Co., London.)

Every religion recognises a highest value, a *summum bonum*; theistic religions call it 'God', non-theistic religions call it Tao, Nirvana, Sammasambodhi (Perfect Enlightenment), etc. If in theistic religions prayer has been defined as a communion or a dialogue with God, in non-theistic religions it could be defined as intense longing for the highest state of perfection or completeness, the realization of perfect Enlightenment.

Prayer in its widest sense is "a direction of the heart" (Rilke) and presupposes a mental or spiritual polarity: either between man and God, or between the finite and infinite, the individual and the universal, the imperfect and the perfect, etc. In Christianity, Judaism and Islam the individual human pole is conceived as the soul, the divine pole as the Creator; in Hinduism as *Jivatma* and *Paramatma* (or Brahman), in Buddhism as the limited, mundane individual consciousness and the potential universal consciousness which is latent in every sentient being and can be experienced and realized in its totality in the state of Enlightenment.

Prayer thus arises from a state of creative tension between the human and the divine, the consciousness of incompleteness (or imperfection) and the ideal of completeness (or perfection), between the present state of ignorance or delusion and the longed-for, future state of liberation: the awakening from the illusion of separateness to the wholeness of life.

What here appears to us as 'future' however, is something that is ever-existing, ever-present in our universal depth-consciousness (*alaya-vijnana*), which modern psychology has now at last rediscovered though greatly misunderstood, by conceiving it as an enemy of reason and the source of uncontrollable drives and emotions and calling it "the Unconscious"[1] — in order to subordinate it all the more to the limited surface-

1 - "It has long ceased to be a secret that the venerable root-concept of modern psychology 'the Unconscious' is a rather uncritical and obscure concept", says Medard Boss in his *Indienfahrt eines Psychiaters* (p. 19).
"Present-day psychological terminology which postulates an 'unconscious' in contrast to consciousness, becomes thereby guilty of a falsification of fundamental psychosomatic facts. This terminology and the subsequently wrongly structurized phenomena are a typical example of the faulty conclusions which arise from a radically applied dualism." (Jean Bebser: *Ursprung und Gegenwart*, Vol. I, p. 327).
"The modern mind suffers from the odd prejudice that consciousness is a purely superficial outgrowth of reality, and that the more fundamental the power, principle or substance becomes, the more blind and unconscious it must be." (Alan W. Watts: *The Supreme Identity*, p. 56)
"In Freud's view the unconscious is essentially the seat of irrationality. In Jung's thinking the meaning seems to be almost reversed; the unconscious is essentially the seat of the deepest sources of wisdom, while the conscious is the intellectual part of the personality. (Erich Fromm in *Zen Buddhism & Psychoanalysis*, P. 96).

consciousness, which identifies itself with the ephemeral interests of its momentary individual existence, thus losing the connection with its origin, the living source of creative power.

In prayer, however, we turn back to that source, we re-establish its connection with the individual, focalised surface-consciousness, so that the tension between surface and depth, like that of a string, produces a pure sound, a higher vibration of the Spirit. It is not the object of prayer to eliminate this tension, but, to transform it into a creative force by establishing a meaningful, harmonious co-operation between the two apparently contradictory, but in reality complementary, poles. Thus prayer becomes a source of strength and certainty, and not merely a sedative or a tranquilliser. The inner peace that comes from it is due to the establishment of a balance between the forces of our individual consciousness and the vast potentialities of our depth-consciousness, in which the experiences of a beginningless past are stored and through which we participate in that greater life that encompasses the universe and connects us with every living being.

Prayer — and in a still higher degree, meditation (of which prayer is only the first step) — is the consciously directed approach towards this vast storehouse of experience, which modern psychology merely observes in its passively accepted, functional effects on our subconscious mind (as in dreams and archetypal symbols) as if it were driven by irresistible forces. "Common experience looks on the idea that we are pushed about by such inner drives as unreal and artificial. What meaning can it have, we say, for men whose lives are dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge or the creation of beauty or the service of their fellows? What place in it is there for devotion and sacrifice and that endless striving for truth and human betterment which ever has distinguished man at his best? ... Men seem not to be pushed into the finest things they do but to follow the urgent call of something that draws them on through hardship and uncertainty and discouragement to the attainment of a high desire."[2] "This conception has the advantage over present psychological orthodoxy in that its attitude is forward, toward a goal to be reached, and not back to the push and drive of circumstance, and is thus in harmony with the common verdict of experience."[3]

Prayer— being a "direction of the heart (*i.e.*, of the inner centre of a human being, which participates equally in his individual consciousness and in his super-individual depth-consciousness) and thus of his intuition, and not merely of his surface-consciousness — is, therefore a positive and active approach to the hidden treasury of universal experience. It does not blindly take hold of experience-contents that happen to well up - but have no bearing on its intuited aim, like a man who descends without a light into a dark storeroom in the cellar of his house, aimlessly taking hold of whatever comes into his hands.

Prayer is indeed the lamp that enables us to discover in the vastness of the treasure-house those very items, that are useful or essential on our spiritual way towards completeness. Instead of dragging fragmentary glimpses of contents of the depth-consciousness into the glaring light of the intellect and submitting them to a deadly analysis, prayer turns our conscious mind inwards and transforms the potential forces of the depth into active ones, because "making the unconscious conscious transforms the mere idea of the universality of man into the living experience of this universality."[4] In other words: instead of raising the archetypal symbols and visions of the depth to the surface and subordinating them to conceptual thought and the trivialities of temporal aims and purposes, the focus of our individualised mind should turn inwards in order to become aware of its universal

2 - *The Biology of the Spirit* by, Edmund W. Simmoss, p. 88.
3 - *Ibid*., p. 90.
4 - Erich Fromm, *op. cit*. p. 107,

source and make use of its immense potentialities in the pursuance of ultimate completeness and perfect enlightenment.

Prayer as a means towards this aim would defeat its own purpose if it was the expression of selfish desires or exclusively concerned with our own individual welfare. Moreover the Buddhist neither believes in separate ego-hood (or an unchangeable individual soul that has to be 'saved' and preserved for eternity) nor looks upon the Buddha as a God, who fulfils his wishes. To him the Buddha is the model of the complete or perfect man, who has become conscious of his universality, realized the divine within himself and thus become a light to others.

If, therefore, the Buddhist bows down before the image of the Buddha, he does not ask anything of him, he does not pray to him, but gives vent to his feelings of veneration in the same way in which he would show his respect and love to his living religious teacher or Guru, in whose footsteps he is determined to follow in order to make his teachings a living reality within himself. The formula, which he utters during the act of veneration before the image or symbol of the Enlightened One (such as a statue, a *stupa*, a reliquary, the Bodhi-tree, or whatever helps him to bring the noble figure of the Buddha before his mind), consists of the words:

"I take refuge in the Enlightened One;"
"I take refuge in the Teaching" (the Sacred Law, taught by all Enlightened Ones);
"I take refuge in the Community (of those who have realized the teaching)."

In Tibet this formula is preceded by the words: "I take refuge in the Guru"; because the Guru is the living representative, the mouthpiece, of the Buddha, the transmitter and embodiment of the Buddha's Teaching, who kindles the flame of faith in the disciple and inspires him to follow in the footsteps of those who have realized the Sacred Teaching (*dharma*), and become members of the Community of Saints (*Sangha*).

The first step of devotion and prayer in Buddhism, therefore, consists in the expression of veneration, loyalty and gratitude towards the Teacher, the living Guru, as well as the Buddha who speaks through him. And just as the person of the Guru is conceived as a link in the continuity of spiritual transmission of Buddha Sakyamuni's teaching, in the same way Buddha Sakyamuni is only one link in the infinite chain of Enlightened Ones. Thus the term 'Guru' comprises the complete chain of spiritual teachers who have passed on the living tradition through millenniums from generation to generation: and similarly the term 'Buddha' includes the totality of all the Enlightened Ones who preceded him or may follow him.

Thus, in Mahayana tradition, the historical personality of Sakyamuni-Buddha recedes behind the universal figure of the Perfect Enlightened One, the symbol of the Complete Man who has realized his divine nature. Instead of worshipping a God beyond all human conception, enthroned in a realm of metaphysical abstractions and generalisations, the Buddhist strives after the realization of those divine properties which have been demonstrated by innumerable saints and Enlightened Ones. He tries to realize them in his own heart, in his own mind and in his own life.

The thought that a god should have created the world with all its evil, its suffering, its imperfection, stupidity and cruelty, appears to him a kind of blasphemy of the very idea of God as the embodiment of perfection. For him it is not a god who is responsible for the evil and imperfection of the world, because the world that we experience is the creation of our own ignorance, our own cravings and passions. That imperfection should come out of perfection and completeness seems to contradict all reason, while the opposite appears more likely to the Buddhist. The experiences of life and the example of those who have attained enlightenment, has taught him that from a state

of imperfection perfection can be achieved and that the sufferings resulting from our passions, are the very forces that lead towards liberation.

But while the Buddhist rejects the idea of a Creator-God, he believes in the divine principle in man, the inborn spark of light (*bodhi-citta*) embodied in his consciousness as a yearning towards perfection, towards completeness, towards Enlightenment. To put it paradoxically: it is not God who creates man, but man who creates God in his image, *i.e*. the idea of the divine aim within himself, which he realizes in the fires of suffering, from which compassion, understanding, love and wisdom are born.

The unfoldment of individual life in the universe has no other aim apparently but becoming conscious of its own divine essence, and since this process goes on continuously, it represents a perpetual birth of God or, to put it into Buddhist terminology: the continuous arising of enlightened beings, in each of whom the totality of the universe becomes conscious.

These Enlightened Ones are what the Mahayana calls "the infinite number of Buddhas" or — insofar as they are experienced as actively influencing the development of humanity — "the infinite number of Bodhisattvas". The latter represent the active forces emanating from those who have attained the highest state of consciousness, inspiring and furthering all those who are striving for liberation. This is represented pictorially by the aura of the meditating Buddha, which is filled with small replicas of the Buddha, symbolising the infinite number of Bodhisattvas who in myriad forms appear for the welfare of all living and suffering beings. Though they manifest themselves in innumerable individual forms, they are one in spirit.

I have described the first step of Buddhist prayer as an expression of veneration and gratitude towards the great Enlightened Ones, who taught the way of liberation to humanity by word and deed. As an example of the profound devotion which fills the Buddhist *sadhaka*, I may quote here some passages from Santideva's *Bodhicaryavatara*, which describes the awakening of the inner light, or the practice of the Bodhisattvas on the way towards Enlightenment.

"In order to take possession of the pearl of Enlightenment, I worship the Tathagatas and also the faultless jewel of the doctrine, as well as the spiritual sons of the Enlightened Ones, the oceans of virtue.

Whatever may be found in this world; flowers, fruits, vegetables and life-giving waters; mountains of precious stone, forest-solitudes for meditation, creepers adorned with beautiful, radiant blossoms, trees whose boughs are bent under the burden of delicious fruit, perfumes and scents from the world of gods, miraculous trees, jewel-trees, lovely ponds of lotus-flowers reverberating with the sweet song of swans, wild plants as well as those of the fields: everything that is suitable as an offering and all that is contained in the infinity of space and does not belong to anybody; I collect all this in my mind and offer it to the Perfect Ones and their spiritual sons (the Bodhisattvas)."

"I am without merits and, therefore, very poor. I have nothing else for their worship. May, therefore, the Perfect Ones, who have no thought but the welfare of others, accept this for my sake."

The next step is the complete self-surrender and change of heart in awareness of our faults and weaknesses.

"Wholly and without reserve I dedicate myself to the Enlightened Ones and their spiritual sons: take possession of me, exalted beings! Filled with humility I offer myself as your servant. Having become your property, I have nothing more to fear in this world. I will do only what is helpful to other beings. I will give up my former wrong-doing and not commit further misdeeds. Due to hatred and infatuation I have committed many wrong deeds. I did not realize that I am only a traveller, passing through this world. Day and night,

without cessation vitality decreases and death approaches. This very day, therefore, I will take refuge in the great and powerful protectors of the world. From the bottom of my heart I take refuge in the doctrine and likewise in the multitude of Bodhisattvas. With folded hands I implore the Perfect Enlightened Ones in all the regions of the universe: may they kindle the light of truth for all those who on account of their delusion would otherwise fall into the abyss of misery."

After the devotee has thus opened himself to the Enlightened Ones and offered himself to them 'an instrument of their peace' (in the words of the beautiful and universal prayer of St. Francis of Assisi, which could have been spoken by Santideva or any devout Buddhist)[5] he renounces the fruit of his good deeds and instead of being concerned for his "own salvation", he vows to dedicate himself to the welfare of all living beings. In other words: he will rather share the sufferings of his fellow-beings, in order to inspire and assist them on their way towards Liberation, than rest blissfully on the pedestal of his virtues, enjoying for himself the fruits of his good deeds.

It is in this spirit that he utters the vow: Whatever merit I may have obtained, may I become thereby the soother of every pain for all living beings. The merits which I have acquired in all my rebirths through thought, word and deed, all this I give away without regard to myself, in order to realize the salvation of all living beings. *Nirvana* means to give up everything; and my heart desires *Nirvana*. If I must give up everything, is it not better to give everything to living beings? I have dedicated myself to the welfare of all living beings; may they beat me and abuse me and cover me with dust. May they play with my body and make me an object of their ridicule. I have abandoned my body to them; why should I worry about it? Those who abuse me, those who treat me badly, those who jeer at me, may they all attain enlightenment."

Who would not be reminded here of Christ's words: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you"? Every true Buddhist who hears these words, will be convinced that he who spoke them, was one of the great, Bodhisattvas, one of the enlightened helpers of mankind, to whom he pays respect in his daily devotions, when he remembers the Enlightened Ones of the past, the present and the future.[6]

The cultivation of an attitude of loving kindness and the conscious penetration of the world with compassionate thoughts and a loving heart — "like a mother who protects her child with her own life" — has been called by the Buddha a "divine state" literally a "dwelling in God" (*Brahma-vihara*). Herewith he has at the same time given a perfect definition of what he considers 'divine'. The love of which he speaks here is far more than humanitarian goodwill, into which some Western interpreters have tried to dilute the *maitri* (Pali: *metta*) of the Buddha,

5 - "Lord, Make me an instrument of Thy Peace,
That where there is hatred, I may bring love;
That where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness;
That where there is error, I may bring truth
That where there is doubt, I may bring faith;
That where there is despair, I may bring hope;
And where there are shadows, I may bring Thy light;
That where there is sadness, I may bring joy.
Lord, Grant that I may seek, rather to comfort than to be comforted,
To understand than to be understood: to love than to be loved;
For it is by giving that one receiveth.
It is by self-forgetting that one finds,
It is by forgiving that one is forgiven;
It is by dying, that one awakens to eternal life."

6 - *"Ye ca buddhd atita ca*
ye ca buddha anagata,
paccuppanna ca ye buddha
aham vandami sabbada." — (Pali)

"The Enlightened Ones of the past,
the Enlightened ones of the future,
the Enlightened Ones of the present
I worship them at all time."

though the above-mentioned quotation, which defines *maitri* as the spontaneous and selfless love of a mother, should have taught them a deeper understanding.

The other constituents of this 'divine state', constituents which naturally flow from this boundless love (and which, on account of their boundlessness, are also called 'illimitables'), are compassion (*karuna*) and sympathetic joy (mudita), *i.e.* the sharing of others' sorrow and joy, and finally that state of equanimity (*upeksa*) which is unaffected by one's own sufferings or successes.

One of the greatest misunderstandings concerning the spiritual and emotional attitude of Buddhism is due to the wrong interpretation of the term *upeksa* (Pali: *upekkha*). A purely negative rendering of this important term as 'indifference' has repeatedly led to the opinion (especially from the side of Christian theologians) that love, compassion and the sharing of happiness with others are only preparatory steps to the attainment of complete indifference, which would thus seem to be the highest aim and the culmination of Buddhist ethics. The fact that *upeksa* is placed at the end of these 'divine states' has led to the conclusion that to the Buddhist love and compassion are only convenient means for his own salvation and that therefore they are not the outcome of true altruism or of equal value with the similar qualities in Christianity.

In reality the opposite is true: just as love is not negatived by compassion or by the capacity to share the joy of others but actually finds its fulfilment in these qualities, so also *upeksa* does not extinguish the preceding attitudes. In fact only a man who is not shaken by enmity or favours, who is indifferent towards his own gain or loss (but not towards that of others) is capable of showing equal sympathy to all beings. Not only do love and compassion and rejoicing in the happiness of other beings find their ultimate perfection in *upeksa*, but we can even say that *upeksa* is the very foundation of these qualities which the Enlightened Ones and those who follow in their footsteps cultivate and offer to the world, as the sun shines for sinners and saints alike.[7]

Thus *upeksa*, in its highest aspect, is that unshakeable steadfastness, that perfect mental and spiritual balance and equanimity in which neither indifference nor lukewarm emotions find a place and in which the difference between one's own self and that of others has disappeared. This has been beautifully expressed by Santideva in the first *Karika* of his *Siksasamuccaya*:

"Yada mama paresam ca bhayam duhkham ca na priyam
Tadamanah ko viseso yat tam raksami netaram?"
"If my neighbour, like myself, hates fear and pain,
in what way, then, do I distinguish myself from others,
that I should seek protection for myself and not for others?"

Here we come to the heart of the problem and to the chief motive of Buddhist prayer: it is love and compassion based on profound understanding of the essential unity of life and the mutual relationship of all sentient beings. Just as the selfless love of a mother is not the outcome of any ethical demand or categorical imperative but rests on her knowledge of the essential oneness of mother and child, so also the Buddhist's attitude towards his fellow-beings is the natural result of his innermost conviction.

This conviction is nurtured by experiences of meditation, of which prayer is the first step. In this sense we may call prayer a preliminary form of meditation. It uses words to guide the mind in

7 - It will be remarked by Hindu readers that *upeksa* is equivalent to the Hindu *vairagya*. Those who read the article by Father Lazarus on the 'Spiritual Traditions of the Greek Orthodox Church' in our issue of January 1964 will also note its equivalence with the equality of *apatheia* which he there describes, (Editor)

a certain direction, and the further it proceeds the less words it needs. Finally prayer becomes mantra, creative speech or word of power, that awakens the dormant forces of our soul — until the mind of the devotee dives into the ocean of his depth consciousness (*alaya-vijnana*), where the reality of a greater life, that connects him with all living beings and the very spirit of the Enlightened Ones, reveals itself through direct experience, beyond words and concepts.

Thus prayer in Buddhism is the path of devotion (*bhakti-marga*) — first to the Guru and the Enlightened Ones (through *saranagamana*, *vandana* and *puja*), then to all living and suffering beings (*maitri-bhavana*) through the Bodhisattva-vows of perfect self-dedication (*pranidhana*) — that ends in the light of knowledge. For he who wants to partake of the light must first open himself. Prayer is an act of opening heart and mind; and while we open ourselves we not only allow the light to enter, but we make the first breach in the walls of our self-created prison which separates us from our fellow-beings. Thus, in the same measure in which the light streams in and makes us recognise our true universal nature that connects us with all that exists in the infinity of space and time, our love and compassion for all living and suffering beings wells up and streams out from us like a mighty current that embraces the whole world. In this way prayer becomes an act of devotion in a twofold way: to the forces of the light (*bodhi*) as well as to our fellow-beings (*maitri, karuna*). The forces of the light, however, are not an abstract ideal but a living reality, embodied in those great teachers of humanity, whom we venerate as the Enlightened Ones.

The more intensely we can put ourselves into their presence, the more alive they become in our consciousness, the deeper we feel for them in response to their love, in admiration of their deeds and in gratitude for their teachings, the greater is their power to act upon us. But in order to experience their presence, we require visible symbols in which the highest qualities of the enlightened mind are expressed and through which at the same time our deepest feelings are aroused.

Such symbols are the various representations of the Buddha-figure, which not merely depict a particular historical personality, but are the outcome of the integrated religious experience of innumerable generations of devotees. Thus the image is not an object of veneration (*i.e.*, the Buddhist does not pray to the image) but a means to experience the presence of the Enlightened Ones. Instead of merely worshipping our ideal or praying to the Enlightened Ones - as if they were something outside ourselves - we must ourselves become our ideal, identify ourselves with it, in order to be able to live it also in our outward activities and in our daily life. An ideal becomes an effective or active force only when it is felt and experienced as an ever-present reality, as is the case in the higher states of meditative experience (*dhyana*) or inner vision. Thus the outer, material image and likewise the *puja*-ritual and the liturgy in congregational worship, in which prayer becomes an act of joint devotion and self-dedication, is only the beginning and the preparation for the unfoldment of inner vision in meditation, in which the devotee becomes one with his ideal. In the gestures (*mudra*) and actions (such as bowing down, offering lights, water and flowers, etc.) of ritual worship (*puja*) our thoughts and emotions are made visible as a means of guiding and concentrating the mind upon the sacred path. We may call it a dramatised form of meditation: meditation put into action and rendered visible and audible. Through the parallelism of body, mind and speech, the co-ordination of movement, thought and word, the harmony of feeling, creative imagination, visualisation and verbal expression, we achieve a unity of all the functions of our conscious being, which affects not only the surface of our personality, namely our senses and intellect, but equally the deeper regions of our mind. In the regular performance of such ritual worship the very foundations of our being are slowly but certainly transformed and made receptive for the inner light.

JNANA AND BHAKTI

By Dr. T. N. Krishnaswami

Jnana and *Bhakti* are like two sweets made out of the same sugar, of which you can choose whichever you like. Giving up 'mine' is *Bhakti*; giving up 'I' is *Jnana*. The former gives up all his possessions; the latter gives up the very possessor of the possessions.

Bhakti is turning the mind towards God. Self-enquiry, the path of *Jnana*, turns the mind to its own inner essence, which is the Self. In Self-enquiry the subject sets out in search of himself. He who seeks must exist. This existence is itself the Self. In *Bhakti* one is disgusted with one's individual self and feels one's nothingness or unimportance and fixes one's mind on the Higher Power. When the mind at last becomes fully aware of the Higher Power it is awed by it and absorbed into it. This is total surrender of the ego. The man no longer is; God alone is.

The Cloud of Unknowing, a 14th Century Christian work in which the soul is oned with God, says that all creatures have in them two powers, one a knowing power, the other a loving power. To the first, God, the Maker of both powers, is eternally incomprehensible; to the second He is comprehensible. This is the wonderful miracle of love. "He may well be loved but not thought. Love may reach God in this life but not 'knowing'." So far is *Bhakti*, but the book continues: "And therefore swink and sweat in all that thou canst and mayest for to get thee a true knowing and a feeling of thyself as thou art. And then I trou thou shalt have a true knowing and a feeling of God as He is." This is *Jnana*. He who does not know his Self cannot know and much less love God.

Here is what the Maharshi says on the subject: "To long for happiness is *Bhakti*. To long for the Self is *Jnana*."

It is *Jnana* to know that the Master is within you, but to commune with him is *Bhakti*. When the love of God or Self is manifest it is *Bhakti*; when it is in secret it is *Jnana*.

To know the Self as bliss is *Jnana*; efforts to uncover this natural bliss are *Bhakti*. A *bhakta* makes no plans, trusting that God who sent us here has his own scheme, which alone will work. He claims nothing. He has surrendered his personality, so that his actions and their results are due to the Higher Power. He accepts whatever befalls with equanimity. He has learnt from the *Gita* that actions go on of themselves, without an actor. A cyclone causes havoc but there is no actor responsible for it. God has created actions but no actor at all.

One-pointed thought of God is *Bhakti*; one-pointed experience of Self is *Jnana*. When 'other' arises there is fear. There should be one alone, whether we call it God or Self.

SILENT TEACHING

(From a record kept by Ethel Merston)

At first, like everyone else, I used to ask questions, but after a time found this to be quite unnecessary. If I were really stuck over some problem, Bhagavan would seem to know it, and I would get the answer silently projected into my consciousness by him … Or, as it once happened, as I sat before him in the hall, mulling over a problem that had been worrying me for three days, without finding a solution, Bhagavan suddenly asked his attendant to hand him a book on the *Puranas*; he turned the pages until he found the passage he wanted, then passed the book to a devotee and, pointing to me, told him to read the passage aloud. It was a complete answer to my problem.

JNANA MARGA IN CHRISTIANITY

Contemplative Meditation with Scripture

By Joel Goldsmith

Christianity has developed almost entirely as *bhakti-marga*, a religion of dualistic worship and devotion. The teaching of Joel Goldsmith is a remarkable reminder of the possibility of *jnana-marga* that it contains. It is an illustration also of the truth that *jnana-marga*, the 'path of knowledge', does not imply philosophy or erudition but is as simple as it is profound. If any followers of the Maharshi, trained to equate *jnana-marga* with Self-enquiry, find Joel Goldsmith's method of concentrating on biblical texts strange, they should recall that it is very close to the use of *Mahavakyas* recommended by Shankaracharya.
This article is specially written for *The Mountain Path*. Shortly before his sad demise in June this year, mentioned briefly in our July issue, Joel Goldsmith had sent us a series of articles for publication in *The Mountain Path*, starting with this one. These will be published as previously arranged. We take the opportunity to declare our deep appreciation for this great Christian mystic who expressed his profound understanding in simple language that all could follow.

Contemplative meditation is the preparatory step before pure meditation without words or thoughts, and its main purposes is to keep the mind stayed on God - to acknowledge Him in all our ways - so that in quietness and in confidence we may "be still, and know that I am God."[1]

We know that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."[2] Therefore, only in contemplative meditation, conscious of scriptural Truth, can we prepare ourselves to attain to our divine Sonship or the Buddha mind. It is promised: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."[3] In other words, if we abide in the Word and if we let the Word abide in us, we will bear fruit richly.

Thus contemplating Truth, we attain the gift of discernment through which we attain Truth-which the "natural man" cannot know. This is affirmed in the *Bhagavad Gita*. "With mortal eyes thou canst not see me. I give thee therefore divine sight. Behold now My glory."[4]

1 - Psalm 46: 10,
2 - 1 Corinthians 2:14.
3 - John 15: 7
4 - Ch. XI, v. 8.

To meditate properly - to develop the ability to practice meditation - it is necessary to understand certain spiritual principles of life. Unless a meditation has in it a conscious awareness of a spiritual principle, it will not be beneficial. It can in fact lead to just a mental stillness in which there is no spiritual fruitage or "signs following." Therefore, you must not only know why you are meditating, but you must know specific principles to take into your meditation.

Let us take the major principle of life upon which a harmonious existence can be experienced: I am I. Declare this to yourself, because it is indisputable. You are not someone else - you are yourself! "I am I." In the great lesson on supply taught in Hebrew Scripture, the Master asks this question of the poor widow who was looking for supply, "What have you in your house?" He did not inquire of her what she wanted or how much she wanted. What do you already have in your house?

Let us see how this can be applied in practical experience. We are many people gathered together in reading and, as you can easily feel, there is a peace among us. There is quietness and confidence, and certainly there is an absence of hate, bigotry, bias, of jealousy. Let us now ask ourselves this question: "How did this peace get here and how was bias, bigotry, and hatred

eliminated?" The answer is clear. You brought into this atmosphere the peace that is here. Whatever stillness and confidence is present - whatever love is with us - you brought it. Whatever of hatred, jealousy or discord is not here, you did not bring into our presence.

What have you in your house? What have you in your consciousness? You have love, you have life, you have co-operativeness and you have peace. What did you bring into this temple? This temple is the temple of God, but what made it so? Your being here in an atmosphere of love and mutuality. Then it is not that this Path is the temple of God, it is that *you* are the temple of God!" Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?"[5] Ye are the temple of God *if* so be you left your personal feelings outside, *if* so be you left human limitations of anger, fear, and jealousy outside, *if* so be you brought in your consciousness the love and the peace we feel here. Because we *do* feel it and because we are cognisant of the peace that is in our midst, we know beyond measure that you brought it. In other words the degree of peace, love, and joy we feel - the degree of healing consciousness that is with us - is the degree that you brought here in your consciousness.

There can be no greater degree of healing consciousness than that which you brought with you; there can be no greater degree of health than that which you brought with you; there can be no greater degree of supply than what you brought with you - and how much you brought, with you depends on namely, (1) how much Truth you know about your consciousness, (2) what constitutes your consciousness, (3) who you are and what your true identity is.

The Master Christ Jesus asks "Who do men say that I am?" If the men are just human beings with no spiritual discernment, they will say that he is a Hebrew prophet, or a resurrected Hebrew prophet, or someone brought down from the human past. But "Whom do *ye* say that I am?" and Peter replied: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."[6] When Peter answered the Master, he was revealing your true identity and mine, and when Christ Jesus said, "Call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven,"[7] he was referring to your consciousness and my consciousness. As a matter of fact his entire ministry was a revelation of man's spiritual Sonship. Therefore, you can bring infinite peace, infinite harmony, infinite healing consciousness, and infinite supply into this group of readers, but you can accomplish this in only one way, by knowing that "I and my Father are one,"[8] and "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine."[9]

Think what would happen if you set aside ten minutes every morning to be separate and apart from the outside world - for the purpose of contemplating God and the things of God. Think what would happen should you set aside ten minutes for spiritual realization! Only those who have been touched in some measure by the Spirit of God would have the capacity to sit for ten minutes in contemplative meditation. Think!

I and my Father are one. The Father has said to me, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." Therefore, I have all that God has; all that God has is mine. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof."[10] Of my own self I am nothing but, in this oneness with my Father, all that the Father hath is mine. "My peace I give unto you."[11] There is no limitation to the amount of peace that I have, because I have been given the Christ peace, the My peace. The Christ peace has been given unto me.

Therefore, when the question is asked, "What have you in your house?" you can reply: I have the full measure of Christ peace. I have all that

5 - 1 Corinthians 3: 16

6 - Matthew 16:16,
7 - Matthew 23.9.
8 - John 10.30.
9 - Luke 15.31.
10 - Psalm 24: 1,
11 - John 14:27.

the Father hath, for the Father has given His allness unto me. God has even breathed into me His life, so I have in my consciousness life eternal. The Christ has come that I might have life, and that I might have it abundantly. Therefore, I have in my house - in my consciousness - abundant life, infinite life, eternal life. because this Christ has said, "I am eternal life." Therefore, I have eternal life in my consciousness as the gift of God. I have an infinity of supply because the Christ reveals: "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things,"[12] and "it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."[13] Therefore, I have the kingdom of God within me, which is the kingdom of all that I shall ever need. I have in my consciousness eternal life, infinite supply, divine peace. The peace which passeth understanding I have.

As you contemplate these principles for five or ten minutes each day, you carry into your world the awareness of the presence of all that God is and all that God has - as a gift that has been bestowed upon you by the Grace of God.

Your having contemplated these truths is the reason there is peace in our midst. You have brought "the peace of God which passeth all understanding."[14] If there is love here with us, you have brought the love that is without limit. If there is supply in this *Mountain Path*, you have brought God's storehouse. All that the Father hath is yours, and you have brought it here. Remember this: what you have brought here to make of this Path a temple of God, you also bring to your business or to your home by your morning contemplation of this Truth. You thereby make of your home a temple of God. You do not find love in your home; you bring love to your home, because love is found only where you express it. In other words if your family is to find love they will find it because you, who are attuned to God, bring it there. You who have been led to a spiritual teaching have been given the Grace to know this Truth, whereas members of your family and your business associates who are represented by "the natural man who receiveth not the things of God," cannot bring peace and harmony into their relationships.

Only those who have the Spirit of God indwelling are children of God. Only those who have the Spirit of God indwelling have been given the "peace which passeth understanding." Therefore, remember: What you discover here at this moment you have brought. Likewise, what you find in your home, in your business, in the world, is what you bring to your home, to your business, or to the world.

What have you in your consciousness? This is the password for meditation What have I in my consciousness?"

Of myself I have nothing, but by the Grace of God "all things that the Father hath are mine."[15] "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof."[16] Therefore, I have been given My peace, the Christ peace. I have been given all these added things because my heavenly Father knoweth that I have need of them and it is His good pleasure to fulfil me. I am filled full of the Grace of God and, by the Grace of God, all that the Father hath is mine.

If you ask Me, I can give you bread: eating it, you will never hunger. I can give you living waters; drinking, you will never thirst.

This is what you are saying in your household, in your business, in the world - only you are saying it silently and secretly. You never voice it openly because the command of the Master is that we do our praying in secret, where no man can hear us or see us. If your praying is done in the inner sanctuary of your consciousness, what the Father seeth or heareth in secret is shouted from the housetops. "Thy Father which seeth in secret

12 - Matthew 6:32.
13 - Luke 12: 32.
14 - Philippians 4:7
15 - John 16:15.
16 - Psalm 24: 1.

himself shall reward thee openly."[17] Silently and sacredly ask yourself What have I in the house?"

I have the Grace of God. All that the Father hath is mine. I have been given quietness and confidence and stillness; I have been given My peace. The Father hath breathed His life into me, therefore I have God's life which is eternal and immortal.

I have that mind in me which was also in Christ Jesus and so I have no human desires and I seek nothing of any man. "I and my Father are one" and I receive all that I require because my Father knoweth my needs and it is His good pleasure to give the kingdom. Because I already have all, I pray only for the opportunity to share that which the Father hath given to me.

Note what transpires in your home, in your business, and in the world as you silently, sacredly, and secretly remind yourself:

Thank God I ask nothing of any man except that we love one another. I ask only the privilege of sharing God's Allness which is already mine. Why should I look to "man, whose breath is in his nostrils,"[18] when by right of divine Sonship I am heir to all of the heavenly riches?

Do you not see why there is an atmosphere of peace among us? We came here for the purpose of abiding in the presence of God and to tabernacle with the Spirit of God which is within you and within me. We are gathered together to share the spiritual Grace of God, the spiritual Presence of God and that spiritual Love of God. That is why there is peace with us; there can be no such peace where people come to get something. When you sit down to meditate, turn quietly within and realize:

As the branch is one with the tree, as the wave is one with the ocean, so am I one with God. The allness of infinity is pouring Itself forth into expression as my individual being, as my individual consciousness, as my individual life. Having received the allness of God, I want only to share it.

As you resume your outer activity, you remember to have a ten-second meditation as often as possible, in which to remind yourself:

The Grace of God is upon me. I have spiritual meat and spiritual bread to share with all who are here, and those who accept It will never hunger. I can give to the world spiritual water, and those who accept this living water will never thirst. "I and my Father are one," and the Father is pouring Its Allness through me, to you, and to this world.

A contemplative meditation has in it something of a back-and-forth nature. You are virtually saying to the Father:

Thank you, Father, that Your Grace is upon me. Thank you, Father, that You have given me Your peace. If I have any hope, or faith, or confidence, Thou hast given it to me. Of my own self I am nothing, so whatever measure of peace, hope, faith and confidence I have is the gift of the Father within me. Thank Thee, for Thy grace, Thy peace, Thy abundance.

You then pause, as if the still small voice were about to speak to you. It is an attitude of "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth."[19] If you persist in this way of life, eventually you will discover that the Father will speak to you, and usually in this manner:

Son, I have been with you since before Abraham was. Know you not that "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world"?[20] Know you not that "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"?[21] If you mount up to heaven, I will be there with you. Turn and recognise Me. Acknowledge Me and you will find Me, even there in hell. If you walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will not leave you.

Turn within and seek Me. Acknowledge Me in the midst, of you and I will change death into life, age into youth, lack into abundance. Only abide

17 - Matthew 6:4.
18 - Isaiah 2:22.
19 - 1 Samuel 3:9
20 - Matthew 28:20.
21 - Hebrews 13:5.

in this Word and consciously let Me abide in you, Whither do you think you can flee from My Spirit?

Open your consciousness and feel the peace which passeth understanding - here where we are.

My peace give I unto you - My peace. My kingdom, the kingdom of Allness, is established within you. Abide in this Truth and let this Truth abide in you. Consciously remember that the Son of God indwells you and that It is closer to you than breathing and nearer than hands and feet. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.[22] ... I live yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."[23] Let Me, this indwelling Son of God, abide in you.

If you have been led to a spiritual way of life, you will not have the capacity to forget your ten-second meditations and your ten-minute contemplative meditations. If the Spirit of God dwells in you, you will be as unable to go through the hours of the day and night without the conscious remembrance of the presence of God as you would be unable to go without food. As food is necessary to the 'natural man', so the conscious awareness of the presence of God is vital to the spiritual man. Spiritual food is essential to the Son of God.

Silently and secretly make this acknowledgement to your family, to your business acquaintances, and to your neighbours: "I can give you living waters." Witness to what degree this changes the trend of your thought from being the "man of earth" who is always seeking to get something - to being the spiritual Son of God who is motivated by the desire to give and to share. "Ask of Me and I can give you the peace that passeth understanding. I can share with you the indwelling Christ-peace which the Father hath given me."

Witness how this reverses the trend of your life. Whereas the natural man receives not the things of God because he is too busy receiving the baubles of "this world," the spiritual man is not only always receiving but he is sharing. He is able to discern that these spiritual treasures cannot be hoarded; they must always be expressed and allowed to flow from the within to the without. And so you secretly and sacredly carry them into your home and into your business, and then you take the next step and let them flow to your enemy.

"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."[24] If you ask Me, I will give you living waters and you will never thirst again. I will give you meat and you will never again hunger. I am come that you might have life, and that you might have it more abundantly.

As you practice contemplative meditation, think what is pouring through you to this world to help establish peace on earth. There has not been peace on earth because so many individuals have been seeking to get it, and few there are who have sought to bring it, to express it, to share it. If there is to be peace on earth, the Master clearly reveals that I must bring it - and this I is the I of you, the divine Son of you. If there is to be peace in the world, *you* must bring it - just as you brought it here and as you are learning to carry it into your home and into your business activity. Peace is not here until you bring it. What have you in your consciousness?

I have the peace that passeth understanding, and I can carry it wherever I will, wherever I am, because in My presence there is fulfilment. The place whereon I stand is holy ground because Christ dwelleth in me. The indwelling Christ is the fulfilment, and where the Christ is there is peace. Therefore I bring peace to my body, I bring peace and quiet to my mind, and I bring peace, quiet, love, and abundance to you, whoever the "you" may be. I bring to you the Grace of God. Go thou and do likewise!

22 - Philippians 4.13

23 - Galatians 2:20

24 - Luke 23:34.

JNANA AND BHAKTI IN CHRISTIANITY

By Sagittarius

I have been asked to write about *jnana* and *bhakti* in Christianity. The enemy is the ego or self-will; about that all agree. The really sensible thing, therefore, would be to stop writing articles and comparing religions and get down to the practical work of killing it, no matter by what *marga* or through what religion.

Whatever method may be used, in whatever religion, it is fundamentally a method of conquering the ego. That is what should be borne in mind always.

Basically there are two ways of doing this: either to break the ego in so completely that it will run to harness and never again dare to kick its heels up or to take the bit between its teeth and bolt, or to destroy it altogether. The former way is called *bhakti marga* in Hinduism, the latter *jnana marga*. Christ taught both.

He taught *bhakti marga* when he told us to say "Thy will be done." There is still a 'me' and it still has a will, but its will is to be subordinate always and in all things to God's will. This is the way most Christians follow - most Christians who are Christians. In Hinduism it is the way of Ramakrishna, who said: "I don't want to be the honey but to taste the honey" - that is to remain apart from Divine Being in order to enjoy It; of Tukaram, who said "I shall ever desire dual consciousness. Thou shalt ever remain my Lord and I Thy worshipper."

Christ taught *jnana marga* when he said: "The man who wants to save his life will lose it, but the man who loses his life for my sake will find it." There is no question this time of keeping a 'my will' which has to be subordinated to 'Thy will'. If the life which has the will is to be given up, how can any will remain?

It doesn't really matter which path you follow. Both lead to the same goal. Only arguing which of them is better leads to no goal at all. The path of *bhakti* may lead to the 'mystic union', the uniting of two who still are two, like human lovers; but that doesn't matter, because from there the process will take its own course through its own continued momentum, with no further need for discipline and theory, until he can say with the Christian mystic Jacob Boehme: "God has become that which I am and has made me that which He is."

You can look at it from another angle too and say that *bhakti marga* is the Path of Love and *jnana marga* the Path of Knowledge. The lover remains separate from the Beloved for the joy of loving. That is the attitude of Ramakrishna, of all the great *bhaktas*. Knowledge means the realization that there is no one to remain separate: there just IS.

Christ taught *bhakti marga* when he said that the greatest of the laws of Moses is to love God with all your heart and all your mind and all your soul and all your strength.

He taught *jnana marga* when he said: "You shall know the Truth and the Truth shall liberate you."[1] But the Jews he said it to couldn't take it - 'What truth? What can you liberate us from? Aren't we free already? Don't we follow the orthodox rules of our religion and scripture?' Christians say pretty much the same thing today too. There are not many who can take it.

1 - St. John, VIII, 32

THE SUFI PATH OF LOVE

By Abdullah Qutbuddin

Years ago, when I still occasionally went to a cinema, I saw a Hollywood version of a Mediaeval Islamic town. Suitably repulsive looking beggars were crouching outside a palace wall, crying: "Alms for the love of Allah!" This was a characteristic inaccuracy. In the first place the Name was mispronounced, the first syllable being accentuated instead of the second, and in the second place 'for the love of Allah' is not an Islamic phrase. 'In the name of Allah' yes, but not 'for the love of Allah.'

Also the phrase so common to Christian writers that 'God is love' is not Islamic. The quality that is equated with God in Islam is rather Truth. Indeed, in the well known story of the Sufi Al Hallaj who was crucified for proclaiming the Supreme Identity while in a state of ecstasy, his actual words were 'Ana'l Haqq', meaning "I am the Truth".

This perhaps reflects the fact that, despite the rigid dualism of exoteric Islam, Advaita is far more widely recognised by the Sufis than by any but the very greatest Christian mystics. Both religions are essentially *bhakti-marga*. Indeed, Indian Sufis, with their methods of ecstatic devotion and invocation of the Divine Name, are practically indistinguishable from Hindu *bhaktas* pining for Krishna, the Divine Lover. The very word 'Islam' means 'submission'. Many Sufi saints, however, comparable in that to Hindu *bhaktas* such as Tukaram or the recent Swami Ramdas, have perceived the truth of Advaita and used its language, although not developing the technique of *jnana-marga*.

Despite theoretical recognition of Advaita, it is the path of love that runs through Sufism, as through Christianity, and the symbolism of lover and Beloved is constantly in use. This does not imply that the quest is a sort of less real reflection of the physical reality of love. In fact, that would be an inversion of truth. There are, indeed, correspondences between different levels of reality, but it is the higher that is more real and is reflected and symbolised by the lower, not the other way round. If the Divine Ray pierces into the dark and secret place of the soul, creating there the germ of new life which grows unseen amid pain and discomfort until the 'new man' springs to life, that is a reality symbolised by, not symbolising, the physical laws of sex.

According to the symbolism used, the human lover seeking the Divine Beloved can appear either as man or woman. Indeed, the two forms of symbolism may be used indiscriminately, since both are true. In Christianity the human soul is traditionally represented, as is the Church itself, as the bride of Christ. There is also, however, the symbolism of the seeker aspiring to be guided and blessed by the Divine Grace symbolised as his Beloved - Dante by Beatrice or the troubadour by his lady who traditionally had to be unattained and unattainable. Parallel to this in Islam is the story of Majnun who goes mad with longing for the dark beauty of Laila, whose name in fact means 'night' and who symbolises the dark mystery, the Cloud of Unknowing. More frequently, however, the human soul is represented as female and as pining for the Divine Lover, just as Hindu *bhaktas* are *gopis* seeking the love of Krishna, the Divine cowherd, the flute-player. Also it will be seen that in the Maharshi's *Marital Garland of Letters to Sri Arunachala* symbolism which might be considered male or female is used indiscriminately. It must be remembered that this was written for the guidance and inspiration of the *bhaktas* among his followers.

The theme of quest for the Divine Lover is far

more widely used in Islamic esoterism than in Christian and is much better attested in literature. Is this partly because few Christian saints and seekers seem to have been poets? In the great ages of Islam the poets were saints and the saints poets. Among the Persians, Hafiz is the greatest lyric poet, perhaps what Shelley or Swinburne is in English, but with the difference that, where in them only an occasional intuition makes some poem of lasting value among much verbal banality, his poems are often of substance which the West, lacking the fire of Divine Love, would consider appropriate rather to the philosopher than the poet,

In Eternity without beginning the radiancy of
Thy beauty glorified in its own splendour;
Love was revealed and its fire set the world aflame.
Reason desired to kindle its lamp from that flame of Thy love,
The lightning of jealousy flashed, and the world was thrown into confusion.
Others staked their fortune on ease and would riot take up the burden of Love;
We, Thy lovers, were the ones whose hearts, experienced in grief, staked all on grief and took up the burden of Love.

Renunciation of the ego is the whole secret, by whatever path it may be accomplished; and who should know this better than the lover? Ansari of Herat writes:

Know that when thou learnest to lose thy self
Thou wilt reach the Beloved.
There is no other secret to be revealed,
And more than this is not known to me.

For the Sufi, love is all-sufficient, as Umar Khayyam writes:

Although the creeds number some seventy-three,
I hold with none but that of love of Thee
What matter faith, unfaith, obedience, sin
Thou'rt all in all, the rest is vanity.

From love to Union, from Union to Identity. The following poem by Shabistari, prosy though it may sound in translation, is removed only by the thinnest of verbal veils from the true and ultimate doctrine of Advaita or Identity.

Union with 'The Truth' is separation for the creature state,
Friendship with Him is estrangement from self,
When the contingent wipes off the dust of contingency,
Nothing remains save Necessary Being.
The existence of the two worlds is as a dream,
In the moment of eternity they become naught.
Absolute Being by its own perfection is pervading all,
Phenomenal objects are mere imaginary things;
Imaginary things are not really existent,
Though the numbers are many, only One is counted.
In a moment, this world passes away,
None remains in the world save 'The Truth',
At that moment you attain proximity,
You, stripped of self, are 'united' to the Beloved.[1]

The Judaic injunction to love, which Christ reiterated, had two aspects, not only to love God with all your heart and mind and soul and strength, but also to love your neighbour as yourself. On the whole, the God-intoxicated wayfarer has tended to neglect the second of these. Naturally, one who loves God will be filled with goodwill towards all His creatures, but this does not necessarily transform itself into action or constitute an active and prominent part of his *suluk* or path. The ecstatic is not normally a philanthropist, even though he is not an egoist. In Christianity he has often been a monk secluded from society. There is no monasticism in Islam, but the Muslim ecstatic also has seldom been actively preoccupied with human welfare.

Today there is a general tendency to stress the love of one's fellows. In Hinduism it would be

1 - The above quotations are taken from *The Sufi Path of Love, An Anthology of Sufism* compiled by Margaret Smith, Luzac.

called combining the path of *bhakti* with that of *karma*. A striking modern exemplar of this was the recent Hindu saint, Swami Ramdas. During the years of his training, before he became a saint, he wandered about the country with the Name of God always on his lips, but also seeing God manifested in everybody he met, not only those who helped him and were friendly but also in the ticket-collector who ejected him from a train and the bullying policeman who warned him on the icy platform. When a *sadhu* gave him a drinking vessel and another stole it, he cheerfully remarked that Ram in one form had given it and in another had taken it away again.[2]

I instance this case because of the common objection that the Muslim could not see things this way on account of the strict Islamic doctrine of the impassable gulf between the Creator and His creatures. Maybe, but the Sufi, without worrying his head over philosophy or theology, can recall the Quranic saying: "Whichever way you turn, there is the Face of God!" With this saying in his heart he can see Divine Being manifested before him in the cloud-capped mountain, the tall trees and brilliant flowers, but also in the dingy streets, the jostling crowd, the mongrel slinking by. He can see Allah looking at him through the eyes of his beloved, and also try to see him through those of the colleague he was jealous of, the boss he resented, the friend he felt rancour towards. He experiences an outflow of love in which there is no sentiment, no distinction between the worthy and the unworthy. He accepts his environment, pleasant or unpleasant, as God-given, as that which is needful for him, and his fellows, helpful or irksome, as objects for love and commiseration. With this remembrance in his mind and love of God in his heart, what more does he need?

2 - See the two volumes of his early autobiography: *In Quest of God* and *In the Vision of God*, both published by Bhavan's Book University, Bombay.

FROM TAYUMANAVAR

By Prof. K. R. R. Sastry

Though living as late as the 18th Century, Tayumanavar was one of the greatest of all the Tamil poet-saints. Bhagavan often used to quote him. He wrote pure Advaita. The following lines show how it could be combined with a spirit of *bhakti*.

I cannot worship at Thy shrine
Or to Thy holy symbols bow;
I cannot pluck the flowers for offering
When in each flower's heart, art Thou.
How can I press my palms together,
My body bent to worship Thee,
How my imperfect service offer.
When Thou indwellest, Lord, in me?

Thou art the vastness of the Void,
The elements, the primal sound,
The Vedas and the quest they bring,
The Goal beyond all seeking found.
Thou art the quest and Thou the finding,
Thou of all seeing art the Sight,
Of knowing, Thou alone the Knowledge,
Of mind and eye the inner Light,
The outer word and inner meaning,
The vocal and the silent Call.
Oh Source of Grace in joy past thinking,
Lone cosmic Dancer in High Wisdom's hall!

THE ESSENTIAL IDENTITY

I

By Wei Wu Wei

"By jointly discussing noumenon and phenomenon, one reaches the highest consciousness and creates right understanding among sentient beings." (Fa-tsang, 642-712, founder of the Hua-yen Sect of Buddhism, based on the Avatamsaka Sutra).

'Positive' is not positive without 'negative', and 'negative' is not negative without 'positive'. Therefore they can only be two halves of one whole, two conceptual aspects of one whole that as a whole, cannot be conceived - precisely because it is this which seeks to conceive.

'Being' cannot be without 'non-being', and 'non-being' cannot not be without 'being'. Therefore they can only be two conceptual aspects of one whole that as such cannot be conceived - in which there is neither being nor non-being as objective existences.

'Appearance' (form) cannot appear without 'void' (voidness of appearance), and 'void' cannot be voidness of appearance without 'appearance'. Therefore they must be two conceptual aspects of what is objectively inconceivable - as which their identity is absolute in non-objectivity.

'Subject' has no conceptual existence apart from 'object' nor 'object' apart from 'subject'. They, too, are twin spinning aspects of the inconceivable in which they are inevitably reunited.

Where there is neither positive nor negative, being nor non-being, appearance nor void, subject nor object, there must be identity. But identity cannot perceive itself, and that is what we are. That is why only he who does not know can speak, and why he who knows cannot speak — for what-he-is cannot be an object of what-he-is, and so cannot be perceived or described.

Positive and negative, being and non-being, appearance and void, subject and object, can be conceived by us because as 'us' mind is divided into subject-conceiving and object-conceived but, re-identified with what they are, we are their total objective absence - which is thought of as pure undivided mind.

"That alone is true Knowledge which is neither knowledge nor ignorance. What is known is not true Knowledge. Since the Self shines with nothing else to know or to make known, It, alone is Knowledge. It is not a void."*

'Space' is a static three-dimensional concept, of which 'time' is the active counterpart, whose functioning constitutes a further direction of measurement. Space cannot be conceived without time (duration), nor time without space (extension). Two conceptual aspects of a unity that is inconceivable; given the name of 'space-time', their identity is absolute in non-conceptuality. Unaccompanied by them, phenomena cannot be extended in appearance, and only as their noumenal source can be assumed to be.

'Phenomena' cannot be such without 'noumenon' nor 'noumenon' without 'phenomena'. Therefore conceptually they also are two aspects of non-conceptuality. Phenomena, being no things in themselves (devoid of self-nature) yet are everything, and noumenon, being the source of everything, yet is no thing. Everything, then, is both, and neither is any thing: eternally separate as concepts, they

* Ramana Maharshi's *Forty Verses* - V 12.

are forever inseparable unconceived, and that identity is the essential understanding.

That is what the universe is in so far as its nature can be suggested in words. The universe is inconceivable because what it is, is what we are, and what we are is what the universe is—and that is total absence cognitionally which, uncognised, necessarily subsists as total presence.

II

"If it is said, that Liberation is of three kinds, with form or without form or with and without form, then let me tell you that the extinction of the three forms of Liberation is the only true Liberation."

Ramana Maharshi's *Forty Verses* - V. 40.

We cannot use mind to transcend mind: therefore noumenon (which is the abstract of mind) represents the limit of possible cognition.

'Noumenon' necessarily is total potentiality. If it functions, in functioning it must be subjective, and thereby inevitably objective also. That is to say, subject objectivises itself and so becomes apparent to itself as object, manifesting phenomenally 'within' itself. It looks at itself and perceives the universe - which is then apparently outside itself, since objectivisation is a process of apparent exteriorisation.

Therefore the phenomenal universe is the objective aspect of noumenon.

This process comports the appearance of space and duration, without which objects could not have the necessary extension - and without their extension there could be no cognition.

Phenomena, therefore, are not something projected by noumenon: *they are the appearance of noumenon* - or noumenon rendered objective and apparent.

This functioning is what sentient beings are, and *that* extension in space-time is what we know as manifestation. In *that* appearance - like all phenomena, of which our appearance is an aspect we have no nature of our own, but in *this* functioning (which is our nature) *noumenality and phenomenality are identical*.

This is why, thus manifested, *we are not* as such (phenomenally), and why *we are as* phenomenal noumenality (or noumenal phenomenality). Thus there is no duality in what we are, but only an apparent autonomous functioning which is the manifesting of non-manifestation.

No entity is involved in what we are, for 'entity' is a phenomenal concept - and every object, material or conceptual, that is phenomenal, is devoid of nature (*is* not). When the autonomous functioning, which is all that we are in manifestation, no longer functions, *i.e.*, when it no longer extends itself in an apparent space-time continuum, this-which-we-are remains totally integrated in noumenality.

Noumenality as such cannot be recorded. What 'noumenality' represents neither is nor is not. It is necessarily incognisable, because totally devoid of objective quality, as mirrorness is, and because it is precisely what we are, and absolutely all that we are, whether non-manifested or in apparent manifestation.

Yet the final word be with Huang-Po:

"There is no difference between sentient beings and Buddhas, or between *Samsara* and *Nirvana* or between delusion and *bodhi*. When all such forms are abandoned there is the Buddha."

HOW I CAME TO THE MAHARSHI

IV

By Dilip Kumar Roy

Dilip Kumar Roy is known throughout India as a famous singer, apart from which he himself composes songs and writes poems, especially devotional songs and poems to Sri Krishna. For many years he was an inmate of Sri Aurobindo Ashram at Pondicherry. Now he is the head of the Hari Krishna Mandir at Poona where, aided by his foremost disciple, Indira Devi, he acts as guru to the many Krishna bhaktas who come. This account of his visit to the Maharshi is taken on his own invitation, from his book The Flute Calls Still, reviewed elsewhere in this issue.

It happened in 1945, I think. I was still living as an inmate of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, even though I had come to feel a growing sense of isolation and begun to surmise that I was a misfit there. My sadness and sense of dereliction only deepened with time till what little peace I had left me completely and I felt all but stranded. But I need not go into the why and wherefore of it all; I would plunge straight into what keeps me company as one of the most unforgettable experiences I have ever had. It does, as it was a landmark in my life.

After having been for weeks in the grip of a deep gloom, I … wrote straight to Sri Aurobindo. He wrote back at once giving me the needed permission, which I deeply appreciated.

I took the train to Tiruvannamalai where Ramana Maharshi lived. But as the train rolled on I felt a deep and growing malaise ... How could I win the needed peace at the feet of one who was not my Guru when I could not attain it at the feet of my revered Guru, Sri Aurobindo, whose wisdom and greatness my heart had never once questioned.

Well, I alighted at the station in a mixed frame of mind...

But it was too late then, for I was already at the gates of Ramanashram. How could I return now, after having crossed the Rubicon? Besides, I was driven by an irresistible urge to meet in the flesh the great Yogi who - unlike my own preceptor,

Sri Aurobindo - was available to all at all hours. And, to crown all, I wanted to test the Maharshi for myself and see whether he, with his magic compassion, could lift me out of the deep slough I had landed in.

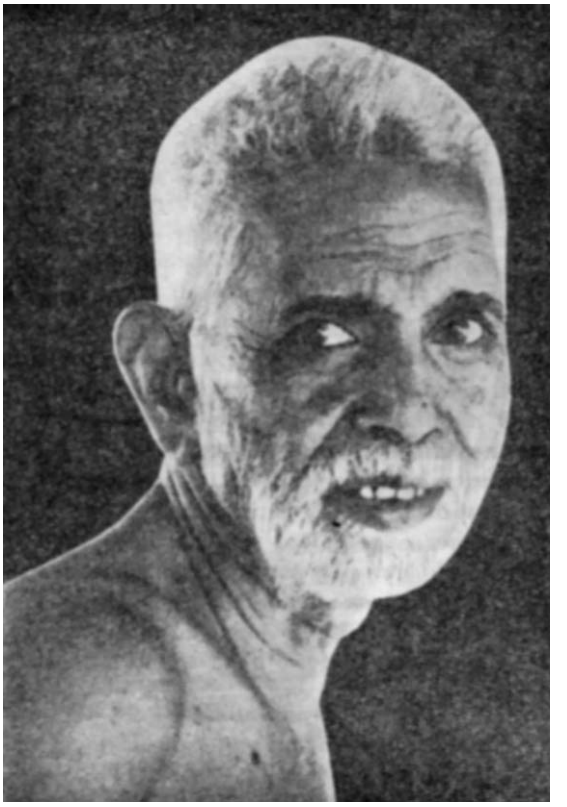
But he did, and against my worst prognostications at that, so that I could not possibly explain it away as a figment of autosuggestion. I mean - if there were any autosuggestion here it could only be against and not in favour of my receiving the goods. But, as the Lord's ways are not ours, I won an experience I could never even have dreamed of. So listen with bated breath.

I can still recapture the thrill of the apocalyptic experience that came to me to charm away as it

were the obstinate gloom which had settled on my chest like an incubus. But, alas, words seem so utterly pale and banal the moment you want to describe an authentic spiritual experience which is vivid, throbbing and intense. Still I must try.

I entered a trifle diffidently a big, bare hall where the Maharshi reclined morning and evening among his devotees and the visitors who happened to call. Accessible to all, the great saint sat on a divan looking straight in front at nothing at all. I was told he lived thus all the time, in *sahaja samadhi*, that is a constant super-conscious state. I was indeed fascinated by what I saw, but I will not even attempt to portray with words how overwhelmed I was (and why) by what met my eyes. For what is it after all that I saw? Just a thin, half-naked man, sitting silently, gazing with glazed eyes at the window. Yet there was something in him that spoke to me - an indefinable beauty of poise and a plenitude that cannot be limmed with words. I wrote afterwards a poem[1] on him that may give a better idea, but I must not get ahead of my story.

I touched his feet and then, without a word, sat down near him on the floor and meditated, my heart aheave with a strange exaltation which deepened by and by into an ineffable peace which beggars description. My month-old gloom and misgivings, doubts and questionings, melted away like mist before sunrise, till I felt I was being cradled on the crest of a flawless peace in a vast ocean of felicity and light. I have to use superlatives here as I am trying to describe as best I can my experience of an ineffable bliss and peace which lasted for hours and hours. I can well remember how deep was the gratefulness I felt towards the



Maharshi on that sleepless and restful night as I reclined, bathed in peace, in an easy chair under the stars at which I gazed and gazed in an ecstasy of tears. And I recalled a pregnant saying of his: "Just be. All is in you. Only a veil stands between. You have only to rend the veil and then, well, just be."

I had found this favourite remark of his rather cryptic heretofore. But in that moment I understood for the first time and wrote a poem in homage to the Maharshi.[1]

1 - This poem has already been published in *The Mountain Path* of April 1964, p, 87.

THE NAME

In most religions (though not in Christianity) invocation of the Divine Name is one of the most important techniques of bhakti marga, that is of the path of devotion and submission. The following passage in praise of it is taken from Namdev, one of the great Maratha poet-saints of the 13th and 14th Centuries, In his youth he was a bandit and murderer. One day he came upon a young mother comforting her fatherless child and with sudden horror it flashed on him that it was he who had slain the father. In violent remorse he rushed to the nearby temple and tried to commit suicide, but he was prevented. He then vowed the rest of his life to penance and worship. He became an ecstatic bhakta and a saint.

All-pervading

The Name permeates everywhere from the heavens to the lowest regions of the entire universe. Who can tell to what depths in the nether regions and to what height in the heavens it extends? The ignorant undergo endless types of rebirth without knowing the Essence. The Name is immortal, says Namdev. Forms are innumerable but the Name is all.

The Name itself is form, and form is the Name. There is no distinction between Name and form. Becoming manifest, God assumed Name and form. Thus the Name and the *Vedas* were established. Remember that there is no *mantra* beyond the Name. Those who say otherwise are ignorant. The Name is God Himself says Namdev. This is known only to loving devotees of the Lord.

The all-pervading nature of the Name can be understood only when one realizes his Self. As long as one's own name is unrecognised it is impossible to grasp the all-pervading Name. When one knows one's Self one finds the Name everywhere. To consider the Name different from the Named creates illusion. Ask the Saints, says Namdev.

None can realize the Name by the practice of Knowledge (*Jnana*), meditation or austerity (*tapas*), Surrender yourself first at the feet of the Guru and learn to know that the 'I' itself is the Name. After finding the source of that 'I', merge your individuality in that Oneness which is Self-existent and devoid of all duality, that which pervades beyond all duality. The Name has come into the three worlds. It is Parabrahman Itself, where there is no action arising out of duality.

Namdev's Enlightenment

This was read out before Bhagavan, in the hall and he said: "Namdev must have written this after he had obtained full Realization on touching the feet of Vishobakesar." The point of this remark is that for a long lime Namdev, although a saint and an ecstatic, was not fully realized. He worshipped God under the name, of Vithoba (as is common in Maharashtra), and so intense was his devotion that the image of God in the temple used to come to life for him and speak to him as a friend. This sort of manifestation is apt to occur for the ecstatic bhakta. A modern example, is Sri Ramakrishna, for whom the image of the Mother, Kali, came alive.

Bhagavan continued with the following story of Namdev's final Enlightenment.

Gora, another saint, who was a potter by trade, held a feast to which he invited the saints, including Namdev and Jnanadev. In the hope of enlightening Namdev, Jnanadev said to Gora: "Your job is making pots. You daily test them to see which are properly baked and which are not. There sitting in front of you are the pots of God, so test them to see which are sound." Gora, who had been told privately of the purpose of the test, agreed and, taking up the stick with which he used to test his pots, went round among his guests, tapping each one on the head. They all submitted meekly till he came to Namdev, who cried out indignantly "What do you mean, potter by coming to tap me with your stick?" Gora thereupon replied to Jnanadev: "All the other pots are properly baked; only this one is not yet baked."

At this everyone burst out laughing, Namdev

was so humiliated that he got up and rushed out of the house straight to the temple of Vithoba where he complained bitterly, crying out: "Am I not your child and your closest friend? How could you let such a humiliation befall me?"

Vithoba appeared before him as usual and seemed to sympathise, but then said Why could you not sit quiet and submit to the tapping, like all the others? Then there would have been no trouble."

At this Namdev became still more upset and cried: "You too want to humiliate me! Why should I submit? Am I not your child?"

Vithoba then said: "You have not yet understood and even if I tell you you won't. But go to such and such a ruined temple in the forest and there you will find a saint who will be able to give you Enlightenment."

Namdev went to the forest, as he was told, and when he reached the ruined temple he found a simple old man lying asleep there with his feet resting on a Siva-lingam. He could hardly believe that this was the man from whom he, the chosen friend of Vithoba, was to obtain Enlightenment. However, as there was no one else there, he went up to him and clapped his hands to wake him. The old man woke with a start and, seeing him, said: "Oh, so you are the Namdev whom Vithoba has sent here."

At this Namdev was taken aback and began to think that this must be a man of power to know his name and why he had come. Still, man of power or not, he had no right to rest his feet on a *lingam*, he thought; and he told the old man so.

"Oh, are my feet on a *lingam*?" the old man said; "All right, put them somewhere else."

So Namdev, out of reverence for the *lingam*, moved them to another spot. There too a Siva-lingam sprang up, and so in one place after another, whatever place he put them. Finally he sat down and took them in his lap, and he himself became a Siva-lingam. And at that moment Enlightenment dawned on him.

After this Namdev returned home. For some days he did not go to the temple at all, although it had been his habit to go there daily and spend most of the day there with Vithoba. After a few days Vithoba appeared before him in his house and asked, apparently guileless, why he had forgotten to visit him.

"No more fooling me now," Namdev replied. "I know now. Is there any place where You are not? Do I need to go to the temple to be with You? Do I exist apart from You?

"Yes, now you understand," Vithoba said.

Commenting on this story, Bhagavan said: "It is to be noted that it was only when he surrendered and touched the feet of the Guru that he obtained Enlightenment."

Verily, the Name is God Himself.

In modern times Swami Ramdas also, like most bhaktas, prescribed the invocation of the Name. The following is an article about it that he distributed privately among his disciples. It is printed here with the kind permission of Mataji.

God and His Name are not distinct from one another. Name is God Himself. The moment we think of the Name our mind is filled with the presence of God. There is no easier way of focussing thought upon God than taking constantly His Name. When we repeat the Name aloud, we feel our heart is flooded with the ecstasy of love, because the sound of the Divine Name awakens the heart to the bliss and love of God.

Although mental repetition of the Name is held to be far more efficacious than the verbal repetition, still the rare experience of sweetness and joy derived by uttering the Name aloud is incomparable. When the entire being of the devotee thrills with rapture to the music of the Name he realizes that the Name is Brahman.

God is both manifest and unmanifest. The Name stands for such a God. Here the unmanifest is the all-pervading, infinite, immutable, tranquil and static spirit of God. The manifest is the entire universe of name, form and movement with all its beings, creatures and things. The Name stands

for this all-inclusive and all-transcendent Godhead, who is both personal and impersonal.

The Divine Name is thus the beginningless source of all creation and the creation itself. God, the absolute, is the nameless Name.

The Name can free the soul from bondage. The Name can take it to the highest consummation of spiritual life. The Name can grant a blind soul Divine sight. The Name can bless an individual with a universal vision full of sublimity. The Name can lift the soul to inconceivable heights of God-realization.

Love, Light, Power and Joy

The power of the Name is invincible. A mind which is considered to be unconquerable, by the soothing influence of the Name becomes docile, yielding and submissive. The mind itself is transformed into God by the power of the Name. He who takes refuge in the Name can work wonders. Death itself will stand in awe of him. He can command all the forces of nature and direct them to bring about a spiritual awakening in the hearts of men. The Name can make a human being an embodiment of eternal love and joy. The Name can convert an individual into a Cosmic Reality - an ignorant soul into a very God.

Where the Name of God is sung, the atmosphere is permeated with purity, peace and bliss; for the symphony of the Name spreads everywhere the splendour of love.

The Name is all-sufficient. The utterance of it is itself meditation. The ecstasy born of it is itself *Samadhi*. The Name is love, light, power and joy.

The writer can vouch for it from his own experience that the Name by itself without any other *sadhana* can grant one the fullest vision of God everywhere and may merge him in an ocean of never-ending love and joy.

There is no *sadhana* which can be so universally adopted by all people and is at the same time so simple for realizing God as the Divine Name. It is perfectly true, in the words of a saint, that he who has God's Name, always on his tongue is a *Jivanmukta*, or a liberated soul.

So, dear friends, to whatever race, caste, creed or colour you may belong, take up the Name of God, and feel the sweet communion with it, and you may depend upon it, your souls through constant bathing in the nectar of the Name will not only be purified but will also be illumined with the omnipresent and omniscient light and love of God. This practice of taking the Name will lead the unyielding spirit of man to complete surrender to the omnipotent power and will of God. In the earlier stages when the Name is repeated with earnestness, faith and concentration, the face and the body of the devotee will shine with a peculiar lustre, his mind will be filled with wisdom and heart with love. This is due to predominance of *Satva Guna* in the devotee. Later when the repetition is continued with the same zeal, he will behold the universe before him as the very expression of God. Becoming one with God, he will have the vision of God everywhere.

Cure for desires

In Islam, as one would expect from a religion whose very name denotes 'submission' no technique is more prized than invocation of the Divine Name.

"The food and drink of the saint is remembrance of the Name of the Lord," said Abu'l Hasan.

Al-Ghazali, the great theologian, said: "What the slave of God derives from His Name is deification, by which I mean that his heart and purpose are drowned in God and he sees none other."

"Recital of the Name is a certain cure for all desires," said Dhu'n Nun Misri; "Whoever hears it faithfully finds the way to God."

Bestows Divine Wisdom

For the Sikhs also there is no more potent technique than invocation of the Divine Name, as the following hymn from the Granth Sahib shows.

Hearkening to the Name bestows
Truth, divine wisdom, contentment.
To bathe in the joy of the Name

Is to bathe in the holy places.
By hearing the Name and reading it
A man attains to honour.

By hearkening the mind may reach
The highest blissful poise
Of meditation on God.

Saith Nanak, the saints are always happy
By hearkening to the Name
Sorrow and sin are destroyed.[1]

Buddhism is the most impersonal of religions. Its essential and original teaching seems to have no place for a Path of devotion or for personal worship. In the Pure Land School, however, in China and Japan, Mahayana Buddhism has developed such a Path for those who need it. A passage in Zendo's Commentary on the Pure Land Sutras runs as follows: "Only repeat the name of Amitabha with all your heart, whether walking or standing, sitting or lying; never cease the practice of it for a moment. This is the work which unfailingly issues in salvation, for it is in accordance with the original vow of Amida Buddha." It was on the basis of this instruction Honen founded the Japanese School of Jodo.[2]

1- *The Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*, p. 34, Allen & Unwin.

2 - *Buddhism*. 162. by Christmas Humphreys. Cassell.

LETTERS TO A BROTHER—IV

SAMADHI

By Nagamma

This morning a European who was sitting in front of Bhagavan said through an interpreter: "It is stated in the *Mandukyopanishad* that there can be no *Moksha* (Liberation), however much *dhyana* (meditation) or *tapas* (austerity) is performed, unless *samadhi* also is experienced. Is that so?"

Bhagavan replied: "Rightly understood, they are the same thing. It makes no difference whether you call it *dhyana* or *tapas* or *samadhi* or anything else. That which is steady and continuous like the flow of oil is *tapas* and *dhyana* and *samadhi*. To be one's own Self is *samadhi*."

Questioner: But it is said in the *Mandukya* that *samadhi* must necessarily be experienced before attaining *Moksha*.

Bhagavan: "And who says it 'is not so? It is stated - not only in the *Mandukya* but all the books. But it is true *samadhi* only if you know yourself. What is the use of sitting still for some time like a lifeless object? Suppose you get a boil on your hand and have it operated under chloroform: you don't feel any pain at the time, but does that mean that you are in *samadhi*? It is the same with this too. One has to know what *samadhi* is. And how can you know *samadhi* without knowing your Self? If the Self is known, *samadhi* will be known automatically.

Meanwhile[1] a Tamil devotee opened the Tiruvachakam and began singing the 'Ten Songs on Pursuit'. Towards the end comes the passage: "Oh Ishvara,[3] You are trying to flee but I am holding You fast. So where can You go and how can You escape from me?" Bhagavan commented with a smile: "So it seems that He is trying to flee and they are holding Him fast! Where could He flee to? Where is He not present? Who is He? All this is nothing but a pageant. There is another sequence of ten songs in the same book, one of which goes: 'Oh my God! You have made my mind Your abode. You have given Yourself up to me and in return have taken me into You. Lord, which of us is the cleverer? If You are given up to me I enjoy endless bliss, but what use am I to you, even though You take me? My Father and God, what have I to give You when You have made my body Your temple in Your boundless mercy to me?' This means that there is no such thing as 'I'. See the beauty of it. Where there is no such thing as 'I' who is the doer and what is done, whether it be devotion or Self-enquiry or *samadhi*?"

2 - There was an informal atmosphere in the hall and it might well happen that someone would start to sing while someone else was talking. (Editor).

3 - Ishvara signifies the Personal God. (Editor).

CH'AN MASTER HSU YUN (1840-1959)

By Upasaka Lu K'uan Yu

(Charles Luk)

Each issue of 'The Mountain Path' up to now has carried an article on some saint or guru. The previous two have been Hindu saints. With the abrupt manner one associates with a Zen Master this time we present a Zen (or in Chinese, Ch'an) Master with the combined strength and gentleness one often finds in a Hindu Swami. The author of this article, Lu K'uan Yu to give him his Chinese name, is well known to students of Zen for his three-volume work 'Ch'an and Zen Teaching' and his more recent 'The Secrets of Chinese Meditation' reviewed in this issue (both published by Rider & Co. London). Himself a disciple of Hsu Yun, he is well qualified to write about him.

Ch'an Master Hsu Yun was born on 26th April 1840 at Chuanchowfu in Fukien province. His father was an official of the prefecture and his mother died immediately after giving birth to him. His uncle was childless and adopted him as his heir; so his grandmother decided that he should take two wives to continue both families.

When he was 11, his grandmother died and monks were invited to perform Buddhist rites. This was the first time he saw monks or sacred objects and it made him very happy. After this he read the *sutras* which deeply impressed him. When his uncle took him on pilgrimage to Nanyo, he became so attached to the holy place that he was reluctant to return home. When he was 14, his father discovered that he wanted to renounce the world and, in order to keep him, engaged a Taoist to teach him meditation. After practising Taoism for three years, he decided that its teaching failed to reach the ultimate goal. One day he fled to Nanyo but was soon found and brought home. Some time later his father sent for the two girls and celebrated Hsu Yun's marriage. Although the latter lived with his two wives, he had no intercourse with them but taught them the *Dharma*, which they understood.

At 19, together with his cousin Fu Kuo, he fled to Kushan monastery at Fuchow where his head was shaved, and here he followed the Master Miao Lien and received full ordination. After being ordained, his cousin left in search of enlightened masters but was never heard of again. Hearing that his father had sent servants to look for him, Hsu Yun hid in a grotto behind the monastery where he practised austerities for the next three years. At 25 he learned that his father had died in Hunan province and that his stepmother with his two wives had entered a nunnery.

During these years in the grotto, he made

very good progress and had most interesting experiences. He says in his autobiography: "I was able to make my heart content and became free to go anywhere I wanted. As there were mountains to stay on and herbs to eat, I started wandering from place to place." At 31, he went to Wenchow where he met a monk who urged him to call on the old master Yung Ching who was well-versed in both teaching and Ch'an transmission. This master urged him to resume eating rice and to use the Kung An (*koan*) "Who is dragging this corpse of mine?" and ordered him to study the Ch'an rules, the Lotus teaching and other important *sutras*. From 36 to 43 he went on a pilgrimage to P'u T'o island off Ningpo, which was the *bodhimandala* of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, thence to the monastery of King Asoka at Ningpo and to many other holy places where he called on well-known masters and made good progress in his Ch'an practice.

At 43, he took stock of his achievements which were not complete and remembering how he had sacrificed his love for his parents in order to join the *Sangha*, he was ashamed that he had attained so little. In order to repay his debt of gratitude to them, he decided on a long pilgrimage from P'u T'o to the Five-Peaked Mountain (the *bodhimandala* of Manjusri) in the North-west to pray for their rebirth in the Pure Land. From the thatched temple of Fa Hua on P'u T'o island, he set out with incense sticks in his hands, prostrating himself every three paces until he reached his destination.

In his long walk with prostration at every third step and concentration on repeating Manjusri's name, he succeeded in realizing singleness of thought which was the key to his subsequent success in Ch'an training. Twice he was in danger of death and twice he was saved by Manjusri who appeared as a beggar called Wen Chi to hide his identity, instead of Wen Shu as he was called in China. The first time he had been caught in a heavy snowstorm and was very hungry, tired and exhausted for several days after which he was given some yellow rice gruel which brought him back to life. Later he caught malaria and dysentery and was dying in a deserted temple on the top of a mountain when the beggar appeared again to give him the hot water and medicine that saved him. Chi asked several questions which Hsu Yun did not understand and could not answer because he was still unenlightened and did not understand the living meaning of Ch'an dialogue (Japanese, mondo). Although he was told by the beggar that the latter was known in every monastery on the Five-Peaked Mountain, when he arrived there and asked the monks about Wen Chi no one knew him. Later he mentioned the incident to an elderly abbot who brought his palms together and said: "That beggar was the transformation body of Manjusri Bodhisattva." Only then did the master realize that he had actually met the Bodhisattva who had saved him twice on the long journey.

After sitting in meditation, he paid reverence to the Bodhisattva on the Five-Peaked Mountain, thus fulfilling his vow taken three years before to pray for the liberation of his parents. During this long journey, which took three years, he succeeded in realizing singleness of mind (*i.e.*, the pure and undisturbed mind) even in the midst of hardship, adversity, illness and danger. On the mountain he saw, as many other pilgrims including devotees from foreign countries have done, balls of light dancing from one peak to another.

The master then went west and south,

passing through many holy places where he paid reverence and sat in meditation until he reached the holy site of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva on mount O Mei in West Szechwan. There he saw at night countless Buddha-lights, like a constellation of bright stars in the sky. He continued his westward journey and entered Tibet where he visited the Potala, the seat of the Dalai Lama, and that of the Panchen Lama at Tashi Lunpo monastery. He then left Tibet to visit the holy sites of India, after which he crossed to sea to Ceylon, and thence to Burma. He then returned to China where he first visited the Cock's Foot Mountain in Yunnan which was the *bodhimandala* of Mahakasyapa, and then passed through the provinces of Kweichow, Hunan, Hupeh, Kiangsi and Anhwei. In his autobiography the master wrote of these two years of travel: "The scenery changed every day but my pure mind was like a bright moon hanging solitarily in the sky. My health grew more robust and my steps were rapid."

In his 54th and 55th years, the master stayed on a mountain to read the *tripitaka*. At 56, he was invited to the famous monastery of Gao Ming at Yangehow to assist its abbot in supervising the twelve weeks of Ch'an meditation. On his way to Yangehow, he slipped and fell into a rising river and was caught in a fisherman's net. He was carried to a nearby temple where he was revived. He was very ill but went on to Kao Ming monastery where he was asked to help at the forthcoming meditation weeks. Without disclosing his illness, he politely declined the abbot's request, asking only to be allowed to attend the meditation meetings. His refusal was regarded as an affront to the whole community and, according to Kao Ming's rules of discipline, he was punished by being beaten with a wooden ruler. As the master was practising the relinquishment of attachment to ego, ksanti-paramita and virya-paramita, he willingly accepted this punishment which aggravated his illness. In order to cure it, he sat firmly in the meditation hall day and night with increasing zeal. He said in his autobiography: "In the purity of my singleness of mind, I forgot all about my body. Twenty days later my illness vanished completely. From that moment, with all my thoughts entirely wiped out, my practice took effect throughout the day and night. My steps were as swift as if I was flying in the air. One evening, after meditation, I opened my eyes and suddenly saw I was in brightness similar to broad daylight in which I could see everything within and without the monastery ..." Knowing that he had only achieved an advanced but not the final stage, he refused to cling to it, resolving to wipe out the final hindrance caused by his last subtle attachment to ego and *Dharma*. One night when the meditation ended after six successive incense sticks had been burned, a monk came to fill his cup of tea. As the boiling water splashed over his hand, he dropped the cup, which fell to the ground and broke with a sound which was heard by his pure mind[1] that was now able to perform its non-discriminating function of perceiving externals. Instantly he cut off his last link with *samsara* and rejoiced at his realization of the Absolute. He wrote in his autobiography: "I was like someone awaking from a dream" which meant that he had leaped over the worldly stream to the other shore of Bodhi. He then chanted the following two *gathas*:

1

A cup fell to the ground
With a sound clearly heard.
As space was pulverised,
The mad mind came to a stop.

1 - 'Pure mind' is a technical term for the innate primordial intellect.

2

When the hand released its hold, the cup fell and was shattered,
'Tis hard to talk when the family breaks up or someone dies.
Spring comes with fragrant flowers exuberating everywhere;
Mountains, rivers and the great earth are only the Tathagata.

After his own enlightenment, the master immediately began his Bodhisattva work of guiding others out of the sea of suffering. His first act was to pray to the Buddha for the liberation of his mother whom he had never seen. Previously he had taken the vow to go to the monastery of King Asoka at Ningpo to pay reverence to the Buddha's relics and to burn off there one of his fingers as his offering to the Buddha for her liberation. Each day he prostrated three thousand times and increased the number until he ached all over and was seriously ill. He became so weak that the chief monk did not approve of his burning a finger on account of the risk involved. The master burst into a flood of tears and finally the superintendent of the monastery and another monk agreed to assist him in fulfilling his vow. He was helped to the main hall where together with the assembly, he paid reverence to the Buddha, performed the ritual and recited the text of the rules of repentance and reform. He wrote later: "With singleness of mind, I repeated the Buddha's name and prayed Him to liberate my affectionate mother. At the beginning I felt pain, but as gradually my mind became pure, my awakening wisdom manifested clearly ... When my finger had burned off, I arose to bow down before the Buddha. I did not need others to support me and entirely forgot my illness. After walking unaided to present my thanks to the assembly, I returned to the sick bay. Everyone present was surprised at my transformation, and I moved out of the hut for sick monks."

From then until his death, the master performed his Bodhisattva work by expounding *sutras*, transmitting the precepts, reconstructing many temples that had fallen in ruins, building new ones and starting seminaries for novices, Buddhist associations for lay men and free Buddhist schools for children. His field of activities was not confined to China but also included Burma, Thailand, Malaya, Singapore and Hong Kong where the number of his disciples could not be counted.

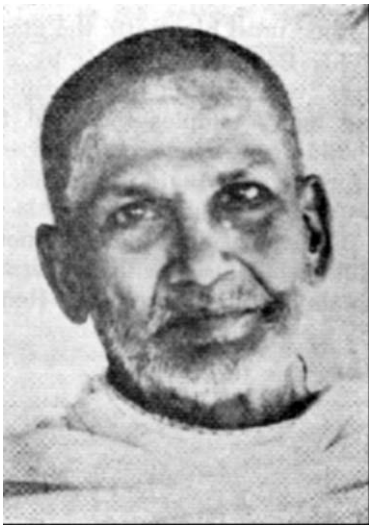
In the course of this Bodhisattva work, the master survived dangers, illnesses, poisoning, beating, torture and persecution. A translation of his autobiography is being published by instalments in *World Buddhism*, a monthly journal published in Dehiwela, Ceylon. Before passing away on 13th October 1959, the master said to his attendant: "After my death and cremation, please mix my ashes with sugar, flour and oil, knead all this into nine balls and throw them into the river as an offering to living beings in the water. If you help me to fulfil my vow, I shall thank you for ever."

Hsu Yun in his extreme old age had chosen hardship and suffering to protect the Buddha *Dharma* in his country instead of seeking safety across the water in Hong Kong.

INTRODUCING MURUGANAR

We have decided in each issue of The Mountain Path *to introduce one or more of Bhagavan's devotees to our readers, so as to increase the feeling of personal fellowship between those who approach from a distance and those who, whether resident here or not, are known devotees of Bhagavan. To start the series we are here giving an account of the austere devotee and eminent Tamil poet Muruganar.*

Among the devotees of Bhagavan, Muruganar, the poet, holds a specially honoured place. In Tamil Nadu the connection between poetry and sanctity has been close and continuous down the centuries. *Periapuranam*, the story in verse of the sixty-three Saivite Saints - many of them poets - was a favourite of Bhagavan's in his boyhood; and in drawing Muruganar to himself the seer was only helping to preserve an ancient tradition.



Born in 1895, Sri C. K. Subrahmanyam grew up in an atmosphere of Tamil learning and became in due course a teacher of Tamil in a High School. His first collection of poems, *Swatantra-Gitam*, owed much to his ardent admiration of Gandhiji and, like the early work of his elder contemporary, Subrahmanya Bharati, formed a distinct contribution to the national movement.

But when he came to Bhagavan and fell under his spell, he renounced all other interests, completely effaced his personality and turned into "a shadow of Bhagavan." And he has lived ever since in a state of stark simplicity, utterly poor and obscure. In thus losing the world to find Bhagavan, he has found a joy to utter and a voice to utter it which have given him a high and assured place among the immortal singer-saints of Tamil Nadu. This sudden and complete change in the poems and in the manner of his utterance, the marvellously sustained and infinitely varied beauty of the enormous bulk of his verse on a single theme, constitutes an undoubted 'miracle' wrought by Bhagavan, permanently there for all eyes to behold.

Muruganar was content with composing his poems and having them read by Bhagavan. For him there was no 'wider public' to whose notice they should be brought. Thus it fell to an admirer, Sri Ramana Padananda, to arrange for the printing and publication of six volumes of Muruganar's poems.

The status of Muruganar as a poet is as yet known only to a small circle. It is given to few to appreciate the architechtonics, the prosodic virtuosity and the wealth of mythological and metaphysical suggestion in the songs of this most scholarly poet; and it is given to fewer still to recognise in them the modulated echoes of the Master's vibrant silence. But discerning critics like Sri V. S. Chengalvaroya Pillai and Mr. Justice M. Ananthanarayanan have not hesitated to compare him with St. Manikkavachagar.

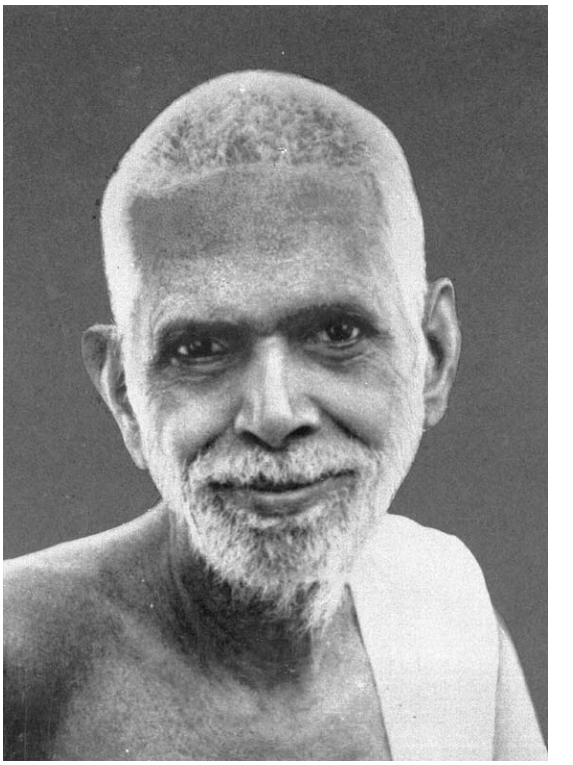
In practising the Presence of Bhagavan under the terms of Muruganar's images and rhythms,

one enters into intensely felt relations with the Guru who figures in various roles of Siva or Subrahmanya, as father, mother or lover, as master, king or commander, as beggar or betrayer. Each of the 850 stanzas in *Guru-Vachaka-Kovai*[1] is a little golden casket wrought with loving care to enshrine and set off a gem fallen from the Master's lips.

The stream of Muruganar's inspiration has continued running fresh and strong even after the passing of Bhagavan. If it has lost some of the old briskness and brightness, it has acquired a new serenity.

Leaving aside Muruganar's own copious outpourings, his success in evoking so much of the little that Bhagavan himself wrote is something to be grateful for. It is to Muruganar that we owe the existence and poetic pattern of *Upadesa Saram*, (*Instruction in Thirty Verses*) the living quintessence of *advaitic* thought and a brief but sufficient *vade-mecum* of Bhagavan's own practical guidance. Muruganar composed a long narrative poem telling how the *rishis* who trusted too much to their rituals were taught a lesson. At the crucial moment, when Siva had to deliver His teaching, Muruganar left it to Bhagavan to provide the *ipsissima verba* of divine revelation.

Many of the *Forty Verses on Reality* owe their final form and the exposition its logical arrangement to Muruganar's efforts. And this game of collaboration reached its climax in the composition of *Atma Vidya*, which fills a musical mould of Gopalakrishna Bharati with a new, profound meaning. Beginning "Easy is Self-knowledge", it raises only to reject the image of "the berry in the palm of one's hand"; so evident is this perception that it needs neither perceiver nor thing perceived. Having proceeded



thus far, Muruganar had to leave off where the *poet qua poet* could only say or imply, "The rest is silence". But Bhagavan, speaking with an authority higher than any poet's, continued the argument, explained the *sadhana* and the grace and ended with a hint, that Annamalai, the Inner Eye, the One Alone, is the author.

With Muruganar one finds oneself taking part in a strenuous game where transcendental experience is created and caught. in words, coloured or common as he chooses. The universal teacher who teaches through silence is made to manifest in a thousand sounds and sweet airs, each uniquely appropriate to a role and a mood. Thrice blessed is the ear trained to hear the secret that only Muruganar can utter. For in his garden of delight, one sports with God in a riot of rhymes and eats forever the ever fresh fruit of the tree of the knowledge that home is heaven and heaven is home.

1 - An English translation of a part of which is published by Sri Ramanasramam under the title. *Guru Ramana Vachana Mala*.

Book Reviews

THE SPIRITUAL DIALOGUE OF EAST AND WEST: By Jacques-Albert Cuttat. (Max Mueller Bhavan Publications, Pp, 50, price not stated.)

This address given by the Swiss Ambassador in India was received here with particular interest, since it seems at first sight to be the same sort of activity that *The Mountain Path* is engaged in and particularly to be akin to the present issue with its theme of the two paths of *jnana* and *bhakti*. Really, however, there is a wide difference. The purpose of *The Mountain Path* is "to set forth the traditional wisdom of all religions and all ages, especially as testified to by their saints and mystics," but not in the framework of any supposed contrast between Eastern truth and Western truth. What is true is true and transcends all such contingent differences.

But there may be different levels of truth. So long as the ego or individual being is felt to be real, so long will the Self or Universal Being be felt to be other than it, in fact to be the God who created it and to whom it must return. This is obvious, because the ego can never claim to be eternal, infinite and omnipotent. Only when and in the measure to which a man, whether eastern or western, whether Hindu or Christian, can conceive of his own individual unreality can he conceive of Universal Being as the true Self of him.

Therefore what Dr. Cuttat calls the dialogue between East and West might equally well be called a dialogue between Advaitins and dualists in India. But it is unattainable, because the Advaitin knows that dualistic worship represents one stage of truth (truth as it must appear so long as the reality of the individual being is believed in) not only in theory but in its power to carry the worshipper to true mystic experience. Therefore on the one hand he cannot denounce dualism as doctrinally wrong or spiritually impotent, which he knows it is not, nor on the other hand can he recognise it as equivalent to Advaita and on the same level, which it also is not. In fact he is already situated at the outcome of the dialogue and therefore does not need to engage in it.

But for the dualist to recognise this hierarchical distinction would require an extraordinary degree of humility. It is remarkable how many Hindu *bhaktas* do in fact evince this humility; but one feels that it is the one outcome to the 'dialogue' which its Western proponents are determined to reject; and since it is the one true outcome the whole idea of a dialogue becomes superfluous. Only two other hypothetical outcomes might be envisaged: one that there are two different versions of ultimate truth, and the other that the East (or Advaita) is wrong and the West (or dualism) is right; the Western proponents of 'dialogue' always avoid saying which they favour, but it is not hard to guess. A point which makes one doubt whether they are really open to dialogue is their misuse of the term 'syncretism'. Rightly used, this means a patchwork religion made up of bits and pieces of existing religions and would apply to a movement such as Theosophism. Dr. Cuttat, however, uses it to include such an uncompromising opponent of syncretism as Rene Guenon. Guenon's standpoint was that each religion is an organic whole-doctrine, ritual and ethics - and must be followed strictly in itself as such, but that there is a universal truth underlying all religions. If the advocates of 'dialogue' deny this we are brought back once again to the question what purpose the dialogue can serve - what purpose other than proselytism. Perhaps they should examine their own minds more clearly first and decide whether they really are looking for a universal truth underlying the different doctrinal forms or whether their secret aim is not to convert Easterners to their doctrine. The only third alternative would be that they are agnostics.

A HISTORY OF ZEN BUDDHISM: By Heinrich Dumoulin, S. J. (Faber, Pp. 335. Price 42s.)

Zen is so much to the fore nowadays that many readers will be glad of a history of it. That of Father Dumoulin, S. J., is both erudite and well written. In fact an attractive book. Unfortunately he slips in occasional passages of egregious nonsense misinterpreting and denigrating Zen in particular and Buddhism is general, whether from unwillingness or inability to understand it is not for this reviewer to suggest. Without going far to seek, there is this one near the beginning of the book: "If, then, this historical setting gives rise to the conjecture that in the exercises of Hinayana Buddhism we are dealing chiefly with psychic techniques, so in the stages and systems of meditation we can readily recognise descriptions of mental states. Nowhere does a way open into transcendence." Actually it is impossible to read the poems of the early Arahats or the descriptions of them without seeing that they reflect the supreme transcendence. "He whose outflows are extinguished and who is independent of basis (for rebirth), whose pasture is emptiness, the signless and freedom - his track is as difficult to know as that of birds in the sky." (Dhammapada, 93, quoted from *Buddhist Texts Through the Ages*, Pp. 45, edited by E. Conze and others, pub. Bruno Cassierer).

To the above misrepresentation or misunderstanding, whichever it may be, Fr. Dumoulin S. J., adds for good measure: "Hinayana Buddhism achieves a spiritualising of Yoga by uniting its psychic exercises to a moral and religious quest for salvation, but it is unable to introduce any element of metaphysical knowledge." How any system can be 'spiritualised' without 'metaphysical knowledge' let the good father explain. Moreover one who considers himself competent to write on Buddhism should know that the 'quest for salvation' exists only in dualistic religions which stop short of the pure transcendence of Nirvana and therefore believe in an individual soul to be saved. And what leads him to suppose that Hindu Yoga stands in any need of 'spiritualising' by Buddhism or anything, else?

Whether ignorant or malicious, such a book is deeply to be deplored.

ZEN FLESH, ZEN BONES: By Paul Reps. (Charles E. Tuttle, Pp. 211. Price $ 3.25.)

The flavour of Zen is to be found far more in cryptic stories and dialogue than in expositions of doctrine. Nearly all writers on Zen sprinkle a few of these through their books. The first section of *Zen Flesh, Zen Bones*, of which the seventh imprint is just out, consists of 101 stories, many of which breathe the spirit of Zen.

The second section is a no less fascinating collection of koans with the commentary of Ekai, known also as Mumon, a great Zen Master of the 12th to 13th Century. In the introduction to this section Paul Reps rightly warns against regarding koans as conundrums and trying to find answers to them. "What is the right answer to a koan? There are many right answers and there are also none .... For the koan itself is the answer, and by the time there is a right answer to it Zen is dead." One is reminded of the Maharshi's saying of 'Who am I?': "No answer that the mind can give is right."

The third section consists of the famous Zen 'Ox-Herding' parable of the quest for the Self. It is set forth in ten admirable episodes illustrated by delightful woodcuts by the modern artist Tomikichiro Tokuriki.

It is rather surprising to find, as the fourth and last section of this book, a Kashmiri tantric text listing 112 techniques of *sadhana*. It records a highly interesting tradition but one quite different from what is known as 'Zen'.

FOCUS ON TUKARAM FROM A FRESH ANGLE. By S. R. Sharma. (Popular Book Depot, Lamington Road, Bombay-7. Rs. 4.50)

Tukaram, who lived in the first half of the 17th

Century, was one of the last and greatest of the Marathi poet-saints of India. An ecstatic and a *bhakta*, he received initiation in a dream from his Guru and later himself appeared to his disciples in the same way to initiate them. He loved singing the songs of saints; and his own poems (like all traditional religious poems) are made to be sung and remain widely popular to this day. Such gatherings for *kirtan* often carried the participants away into a state of ecstasy. It is said that at the end of his life his body simply disappeared, reabsorbed into Spirit.

He was one of those who won through to *Jnana* by sheer force of *bhakti*. He refused to be confined in either category. Sometimes he would definitely proclaim himself a *bhakta*: "I do not seek God-Knowledge. I shall ever desire dual consciousness. Thou shalt ever remain my Lord and I Thy worshipper." However, the following stanza shows how this duality was in fact the permanent Mystic Union.

"Between you and me there is no difference I was only joking about duality. You are my own form, I am Yourself in all certainty. I am within You and You take my service. I am immovable within You, and You are the power within me. You speak through my mouth and I feel bliss within You. Tuka says: names are very misleading."

ery interesting is his explanation of this. "The glory of the *bhaktas* is known to them only. It is hard for others to comprehend ... In order to increase the happiness of love in this world, they display duality without actually dividing. Tuka says: this is understood by those only who have experienced the Unity of Faith."

This is a queer, jumbled little book about the great poet-saint. Scraps of information and views of Tukaram and his great predecessors mingle with quotations and parallels with other saints, Sufi and Christian as well as Hindu. However, the sayings of Tukaram quoted in it are a rare treasure amply atoning for such faults.

GURU'S GRACE, AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MOTHER KRISHNABAI.: Translated by Swami Ramdas. (Anandashram, Kanhangad, Pp. 255. Price Rs. 2.50)

In her very emotional autobiography Krishnabai, the 'Mother' of Anandashram, apostrophises 'Papa' at the opening of almost every paragraph: "Oh all-pervading Papa!", "Papa, protector of the humble!", and so forth. She also says that she has realized her identity with Universal Being, so this 'Papa' must be identical with herself. When she says that 'Papa' in the form of certain troublesome visitors it the Ashram rejected the guidance of 'Papa' and that all this was only 'Papa's' *lila* or game, it is clear that by 'Papa' she means at the same time God Almighty and Swami Ramdas.

However, doctrinal considerations are far from being in the forefront with her. The book primarily tells the story of her tempestuous *sadhana* and her assaults on the ego and struggle for purity. It shows quite unintentionally what beauty and grace she brought to Anandashram and how she found her path in service to all who came there and taught others also to strive through service. But service did not mean submissiveness. We read how constantly she opposed the suggestions of 'Papa' (meaning here, of course, the human Ramdas) on questions of Ashram life and management. And it often turned out that she was right. Yet through it all one sees a loving and loveable disposition.

It would be interesting to have a sequel to this volume, describing developments in Anandashram and in Mataji's own life and outlook since the passing of Swami Ramdas.

SRI RAMADASA GITA: By M. R. Bhat (Anandashram, Pp. 160, Price Rs. 2.)

Prof. M. Ramakrishna Bhat has made a Sanskrit Gita of the teachings of Swarni Ramdas in fourteen chapters, each chapter comprising the answer to a doctrinal question. This is here printed with an English verse by verse translation. It is orthodox and inspiring *upadesa*. It is doubtless in full

agreement with the teaching of Swami Ramdas, although the emphasis is far more on metaphysical exposition and less on pure *bhakti* than was usual in the actual talks of the Swami.

THE FLUTE CALLS STILL: By Dilip Kumar Roy and Indira Devi (Indira Niloy, Hari Krishna Mandir, Poona-16, Price Rs. 6.50.)

The first part of *The Flute Calls Still* comprises a series of letters in which Indira Devi tells of her *sadhana* as a disciple of Dilip Kumar Roy and incidentally describes the growth of the Hari Krishna Mandir over which they jointly preside. The second part is also composed of letters but this time by Dilip Kumar Roy. Their main theme is Indira's ecstatic trances and visions of Sri Krishna. In these she often becomes identified with Mira Bai who sings through her ecstatic songs of love for Krishna. Many of these are rendered into English verse by Dilip Kumar Roy.

An air of love and purity pervades the book. One feels that Hari Krishna Mandir must be a very joyful place. And there is an atmosphere of uncompromising integrity. In nothing does this show more clearly than in the refusal of the joint gurus of the institution to claim Realization, despite trances, visions and miracles. In view of all the dubious claims that are made these days, such abstention shows true nobility.

Indira Devi, it should be said, is reluctant to speak about her visions and experiences and does so only on the insistence of her guru, Dilip. Her reluctance seems praiseworthy.

- Arthur Osborne.

TOLERANCE, A STUDY FROM BUDDHIST SOURCES: By Phra Khantipalo. (Rider, Pp. 191, Price 25s.)

It is a surprising fact that tolerance, handmaid of coexistence, extolled by so many of our present-day secular leaders as the supreme virtue, is a word completely unknown to the ethical systems of the world's great religions.

Phra Khantipalo, a young English *bhikkhu* resident in Thailand, admits at the beginning of his introduction that there is no exact equivalent for the world in the early Pali scriptures. The nearest we get to it is 'patience'. Had he exercised a little more patience he might have written a less intolerant book. Had he taken the trouble to study a little more deeply, to reflect a little more thoughtfully on the great traditions of antiquity which he condemns so glibly, he might (who knows?) at least have learnt to tolerate them.

Everybody admires the remarkable record of non-violence which has characterised the propagation of Buddha Dhamma down the ages. It has had its doctrinal battles, internal and external, and today, alas, is being exploited like other religions for political and nationalistic ends, but even those who cannot subscribe to the author's intolerant assertion that it is the sole repository of doctrinal truth will readily admit that with regard to actual violence its hands are cleaner than those of any of its competitors in the field. We can only regret that Phra Khantipalo, whose book reminds us painfully of certain nineteenth century Christian missionaries, has performed such a singular disservice to the dhamma he aspires to serve.

Like many a good missionary before him, Phra Khantipalo has cast a broad glance at the religious customs and beliefs of those outside the fold for the sole purpose, it seems, of holding them up to ridicule and contempt. Nothing has escaped his zealous eye, from beef-eating and wine-bibbing in the Vedas to the persecution of Christian mystics by the Church hierarchy. Like many a good missionary before him, he has torn three quotations from the Holy Qur'an out of their context to support the popular Western image of Islam - sword in one hand, Qur'an in the other.

Part of the author's difficulty seems to arise from a fear that any recognition of another's point of view must inevitably result in a woolly syncretism. One cannot help suspecting that as a Buddhist missionary, he must, like his Christian rivals, have run up against the Neo-Hindu claim that all religions are one and found it a particularly tiresome nut to crack. We sympathise with him here, but surely it

is not necessary to be a syncretist in order to recognise the essential validity of all ancient traditions, taking into due consideration their historical and geographical contexts. We still remain free to regard our own particular orthodoxy as the best - at least for us. It does, however, require more sympathetic understanding and reflective study than the author seems prepared to give to the subject.

As Phra Khantipalo cannot bear to tolerate those whom he considers less tolerant than himself, it seems a pity that he did not maintain a noble Aryan silence. Might we suggest that he re-read Appendix 11 of his book, entitled *The Compassionate Character of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Disciples* in which he has assembled a number of pertinent and memorable texts we would all do well to ponder. Or again, there is the quotation from the *Upasaka Sila Sutra* with which he opens his introduction:

> When you see men in disharmony try to create harmony.
>
> Speak good of others and never of their faults,
>
> Cherish a good mind even for your enemy.
>
> Hold to the mind of compassion and regard all beings as your parents.

Is this really what he is trying to do?

LAST DAYS OF THE BUDDHA: A Translation of the Maha Parinibbana Sutta by Sister Vajira and Francis Story. (Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, Ceylon, Pp. 100, Price not stated.)

Students of Buddha Dhamma have long been in need of cheap reliable translations from the Pali Canon and will welcome the present series, in pamphlet form, made by such recognised scholars as the Theras Nyanaponika, Narada, Soma and Nyanamoli.

The translation of a sacred text into dignified contemporary prose always presents difficulties, and the Pall Canon with its rigid structure, abundance of technical terms, stock phrases and paragraphs and addiction to the passive voice is no exception.

What to do with such phrases as 'Four constituents of psychic power' which, unexplained, is as meaningless in English as in the original? Or with such oft-repeated phrases as "choice food, hard and soft," which sounds singularly unappetising to the modern Western ear.

Sister Vajira, a German lady who, as her introduction shows, is not altogether at home in the English language, can hardly be blamed for doing nothing about them at all. She shows a strong preference for the language of the King James Bible, but not consistently. In any case it seems rather odd that while the Churches are busy trying to escape from the Authorised Version modern Buddhists should be still in its thrall.

The designation of Ambapali, the Buddha's courtesan disciple, as "the mango lass" inevitably sets us wondering what Bobbie Burns would have made of this remarkable lady. An interesting speculation but hardly conducive to our concentration on the text.

But let us not be ungrateful. Sister Vajira has obviously been at pains to give us a reliable, reverent rendering of this important sutta and on the whole it reads quite well.

- R. F. Rose.

MYSTICISM IN WORLD RELIGION: By Sidney Spencer. (Pelican Rooks Pp, 363, Price 7s 6d. Madras Agent: Orient Longmans)

Pelican Books obviously knew their man when they invited the Reverend Sidney Spencer to tackle the formidable task of surveying the whole field of mystical experience in historical religions in a paperback volume of little more than 350 pages.

The author, one time principal of Manchester College, Oxford, and now a Unitarian Minister, has a formidable knowledge of his subject, ranging from the numinous experiences of so-called primitive peoples to the exalted testimonies of the great masters - Hindu, Buddhist, Chinese, Greek, Jewish, Christian and Muslirn. Avoiding all generalisations and apparently free from all personal bias, he is at great pains to present us with all the facts and let them speak for themselves. The fifty pages devoted

to Hinduism, for instance, embrace the *Upanishads*, *Gita*, Vedanta (Shankara, Ramanuja and Madhva) the *bhakti* cult of Vaishnavism, Kashmiri Shaivism and Shaiva Siddhanta. His treatment of other religious traditions is equally comprehensive.

Inevitably a book of this kind has rather the character of an encyclopaedia, but the warm sympathy the author feels for his subject raises it above the level of a simple book of reference. It is refreshing to find such scholarly accuracy going hand in hand with an open-minded freedom from prejudice and special pleading. His method may not please certain pandits and theologians who are loath to allow salvation to those outside the fold, but even they will be hard put to it to find fault with his presentation of the data.

Somebody once said: "The study of comparative religion has left me only comparatively religious." The Reverend Sidney Spencer has clearly not suffered from this occupational hazard. Nor, we feel confident, will his readers.

AT HOLY MOTHER'S FEET: (Teachings of Shri Sarada Devi), By her direct disciples. Translated from the Bengali, with an introduction by Swami Nikhilananda. (Advaita Ashram, Almora, Pp. 383, Price Rs. 5.)

Sarada Devi emerges from these reminiscences of her disciples in all her simplicity and greatness. She stayed very much in the background during Sri Ramakrishna's lifetime, considering it a great privilege to be able to serve him and his disciples and content with a life of hard work and worship. However, after his death she was recognised as a guru and blossomed out as the Holy Mother, even though, on her own admission, her remembrance of her true nature was spasmodic, not constant.

What strikes one is the great love that she showed to all who came to her for help, the human, sensible and truly spiritual approach to their problems and her great forbearance in the face of personal trials. When her mother had reproached Sri Ramakrishna, saying that, by celibacy, he was depriving her of the sweet sound of being called 'mother', he had replied that she would have so many sons that her ears would tingle with the sound of 'mother'; and so it was.

There is no doubt that real power flowed through her as a guru. Simple and unlettered as she was, speaking no language but Bengali, she became a teacher and mother to learned and ignorant alike, not only Hindus but foreigners. To all of them she gave real affection and solace. Her path combined *karma marga* and *bhakti*. When her disciples were not performing ritual worship or saying invocations she liked them to be working. She did not approve of idleness or even of long hours of meditation. At one with Sri Ramakrishna, she was at the same time his greatest *bhakta*.

Parts of these reminiscences have appeared from time to time in the periodical 'Prabuddha Bharata', but it is good to have them gathered together into a single book. An excellent biographical introduction by Swami Nikhilananda increases its appeal.

- Unnamulai

THE TEMPLE AND THE HOUSE: By Lord Raglan. (Routledge and Kegan Paul, Pp. 218. Price: 30s.)

The author of this stimulating book provides a new approach to the question of the progress of societies in general and of the origin of houses in particular. Examining the currently accepted theories on the subject, Lord Raglan proves, with the help of a large mass of data assembled in the course of his purposive career, that houses did not start with primitive constructions for shelter as usually propagated, but represent modified editions of the original temples and palaces, 'Cosmic buildings' as he terms them - which were designed according to the then prevailing conceptions of the Cosmos. The shape of the houses changed from round to square with the change of ideas about the shape of the universe. These buildings were erected as dwelling places of the Gods, with due architectural provision for their functional activities. They were guarded from external pollution and visitations of evil spirits through various rituals.

The kings as earthly representatives of the Gods fashioned the palaces on those models and in due course the institution of the dwelling place spread downwards in society, and outwards (from the Capital) in the provinces, keeping intact most of the features of the temple.

The author surveys the customs obtaining in a large number of societies, all over the world, especially relating to marriage, the hearth-fire, births and deaths in the house etc., and presents a thesis which should go a long way in modifying and revising many of the long-held notions in the matter.

Lord Raglan's corrective conclusions on the theories of progress are welcome. History is not all progress, all the time (P. 197). Some of his statements, however, are open to question, *e.g.*, "There is nothing natural in human culture in any of its manifestations ... Nobody supposes languages to be natural." We do. Linguistic studies do point to an intimate relation between human feelings, emotions, states of mind and the sounds and vocables from which the original languages came to evolve.

THE BHAGAVADGITA: By R. D. Ranade. (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chaupatty. Bornbay-7, Pp. 321, Price Rs. 10.)

Books on the Gita continue to multiply but few among them have the maturity of thought and unity of vision that underlie Dr. Ranade's exposition. A philosopher himself, trained in the ways of the logical intellect, the author weighs the contributions and the shortcomings of every notable theory advanced by scholars on the Gita and offers his own study of the scriptures in terms of God-realisation.

The work is divided into five parts and deals with the subject in a historical survey. Dr. Ranade first studies the relation of the Gita to the Upanishads, the Sankhya and the Brahma Sutras; he examines the different meanings given to the same terms and the varying connotations of certain key conceptions, such as *Avyakta, Kaivalya, Asvathha*, in the Gita *vis-a-vis* the other ancient texts.

He then proceeds to expound the viewpoints of the Acharyas Shankara, Ramanuja and Madhva and others. He pays special attention to Jnaneshwara, particularly to what he calls his doctrine of "asymptotic approximation to Reality" which holds that there can never be complete identity of status between the seeker and God.

The third and fourth parts cover the various theories of modern scholars - Western and Eastern - and the author's own interpretation, in terms of modern thought, showing how the Gita leads the being through a mental and moral discipline towards the Gates of the Spirit opening on a supreme Beatitude.

A most useful addition to Gita literature.

CONQUEST OF THE SERPENT: By C. J. Van Vliet. (Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-14. Pp. 179, Price Rs. 3.00)

The legend of the serpent standing guard at the door of a priceless treasure is to be found in almost all the traditions of the world. The precise meaning given to the symbol, however, varies from place to place; our author interprets it as the serpent of sexuality standing in the way of the wealth of spiritual consciousness. Leaving aside for the moment a deeper perception which identifies the treasure with Immortality, as also the question whether it is not ego in general rather than sex in particular which is the hurdle met by the seeker in his quest for the spiritual goal, we are at one with the writer in his analysis of the role of sex in evolution, the necessity of continence, his rebuttal of the superficial arguments by a section of medical opinion against celibacy and the innumerable ways in which sexual purification contributes to the higher development of man.

The ancients of India were never tired of advocating the ideal of *Brahmacharya* for those who sought a life higher than that of the senses. *Retas*, when conserved, changes automatically into *ojas*; that part of the life-force which formulates itself into reproductive energy and normally goes out of the system converts itself, if restrained, into a life-building dynamism and, at its highest, feeds

the brain in the form of a radiant energism. That is how sex-conservation results in the heightening of the life-potential which can be developed by spiritual pressure into a power which can hold its own against the onslaughts of disease, disintegration and eventually even death. The author's remarks on the necessity of complete control over sex in practices based on the awakening of *Kundalini* or when one enters into the occult spheres of life are based on irrefutable yogic experience and deserve to be pondered over by all practitioners of this line of yoga.

The book is rational, persuasive, balanced.

SADASIVA BRAHMAN and VOICE OF TAYUMANAVAR: both by Shuddhananda Bharati: THE YOGI AND HIS WORDS: Compiled by Swami Satyananda and others. (Shuddhananda Library. Yoga Samaj, Adyar. Madras-20.)

Sadasiva Brahman was a most remarkable Avadhuta of the South in the 18th century. He was deeply learned in the ancient lore and his works in Sanskrit, notably the *Atma Vidya Vilasa*, are gems of spiritual wisdom. Saint Tayumanavar, another luminary in the religious firmament of Tamil Nadu, was his contemporary and he received from Sadasiva Brahman the potent message of Silence.

Sri Shuddhananda Bharati writes in these booklets briefly but passionately about the lives and teachings of the two saints.

The third book issued by the Shuddhananda Library, contains, besides a life-sketch of Sri Shuddhananda Bharati, compilations from the lavish tributes paid to him by various friends and admirers and extracts from his talks on all subjects.

SADHANA FOR SELF-REALIZATION: By Swami Pratyagatmananda Saraswati and Sir John Woodroffe (Arthur Avalon) (Ganesh, Madras, Pp, 127, Price Rs. 6.)

Professor Pramatha Natha Mukhopadhyaya - as he was known in his *purvasrama* - was one of the stalwarts in the early years of the present century who spearheaded the cultural and religious renaissance of the nation. He was among the first - along with Sri Aurobindo and other eminent figures - to join the National Council of Education which was founded to reorientate education on lines suited to the genius and needs of the country. He wrote at length on Vedanta, interpreting its profound thought in terms of modern science, and projected this ancient knowledge on the pragmatic mind of the day. He did Yeoman service by guiding and collaborating with scholars like Sir John Woodroffe and Indian colleagues in the resuscitation of the Tantric tradition of this land, till then thoroughly discredited for a variety of reasons.

That is not all. He not merely wrote and taught, but also lived what he believed. In his own life he took steps to give a practical shape to the high knowledge that was given to him and built up an inner edifice that is now happily casting its glow of Light, Power and Joy on all who come in its environs.

Sadhana for Self-realization is a fine summary of his efforts in the sphere of *sadhana* to bring home to the world of seekers the practical bearings of the Tantra, especially the Shakta Tantra. The bulk of this volume is from the pen of Swamiji. Only a small section (on Mantras) is from Sir John Woodroffe.

It is a selective compilation from his writings pertaining to *sadhana*, spread over a number of decades. Though he says that the book is not new, still the long Introduction he has written to preface the selections sets a new key and opens out new vistas in the appreciation and utilisation of Tantra, Mantra, Yantra, Kundalini - subjects that have received more than adequate treatment in his pages.

- M. P. Pandit

THE SECRET OF CHINESE MEDITATION: By Charles Luk (Rider & Co., London, Price 35s.)

Upasaka Lu K'uan-yu (Charles Luk) has given us another valuable book to add to our gratitude for the three volumes of "Ch'an and Zen Teaching," and in many ways it presents an increased maturity and clarity of expression. Its title "Meditation" and

the Table of Contents listing six methods of "Self -cultivation" will sufficiently warn those who follow the great Masters for whom such an approach was diametrically opposed to the direct awakening which they represented, but the book must be appraised for what it teaches and should not incur reproach for what it does not.

This teaching represents Ch'an as generally found in the East today, and I think in many respects also the Zen of Japan, for there is a general abandonment of the direct approach and a tacit acceptation of the long way round, via a supposed "self", for those who regard themselves as unfitted to undertake an immediate displacement. They choose to assume that we in the West are in the same condition and Mr, Luk repeats here what I have heard from the mouths of so many, but there are those among us who think differently and who maintain that we are as fresh to this inspiration, and as ready to tackle the vertical ascent, as they themselves were a thousand years ago.

Mr. Luk gives us a portion of the famous Surangama Sutra, which we so lamentably lack, dealing with twenty-five approaches to "enlightenment", discussed in the presence of the Buddha by the most eminent Bodhisattvas. This probably rather late Sutra is highly regarded in China, and this important section is a valuable acquisition which serious Buddhists will greatly enjoy.

Thereafter he gives us extracts, lucidly commented by himself, on the 'methods' employed in Ch'an as described by well-known Masters - all, of course, of the later periods - followed by those employed by the admirable Pure Land school, by the scholarly T'ien T'ai (Tendai) school, and by the later Taoists, with a description of authentic experiments, and a chapter on Chinese yoga which he himself generously demonstrates to some of his friends.

To those who fight shy of it, not wishing to be distracted from their practice of non-practice or direct seeing, one may say that they will miss much valuable and interesting information; one may ask them who there could be to be distracted, and assure them that they too may benefit by this work.

In view of the modest dimensions of the volume the publishers may be taken to task for printing so many extracts in painfully small print, excessively trying to the eyes and detrimental to appreciation. Another inadequacy, for which also Mr. Luk is certainly not responsible, is the description of the frontispiece as "The embalmed body of Ch'an Master Wen Yen." The Chinese Masters were never embalmed, and are not now. In extremely rare cases, their funerary jar being opened after three or five years, the body has been found to be intact. It is then lacquered or gilded and preserved in the posture in which the Master died. Such bodies do not at all resemble mummies or the embalmed. Such gratuitous interpretations surely should not occur in print?

Readers' grievances should be voiced in notices of books, and those who have reacted against Mr. Luk's constant reiteration of the redundant expression "pure and clean" will again suffer, though perhaps less often. The Chinese word means "pure", pure means "unmixed", and when - as nearly always - it is applied to Mind it merely implies "devoid of objects". Another grievance of which one has heard a good deal is the introduction of the prefix "self". Such a careful and conscientious translator as Mr. Luk, and he is that above all else, must be convinced that self is implied, but readers no doubt find it difficult to forget that in the Diamond Sutra the Buddha is said to have stated - fifteen times - I think - that there is no such thing. To Mr. Luk the prefix probably refers to the nature of the noun to which it is attached, as for instance, "self-nature" meaning the self or nature of nature rather than the self of the object, but it may be wondered whether ingenuous readers realise that?

"Merits" and "vows" are other awkward words - absurd when applied to Bodhisattvas who by definition are rid of self, and "passions" for *Klesha* merely raises a smile in people who do not spend their lives alternating between towering rages and unappeasable lust, or on the other hand may lead them to think that they must be on the verge of

"enlightenment". In pointing out the above cases I am not in fact singling out Mr. Luk, as might appear to be the case. No doubt he would reply that it is not for him, a foreigner, to invent new technical terms in English. Personally he is to be absolved from all reproach, but it is time that English translators supplied him with a rational list of technical terms, and ceased apparently to consider that it is the business of a translator to demonstrate his own pedantry rather than to reveal what his author was seeking to make clear. The abolition of jargon is urgently needed if Buddhist teaching is to develop in the West, for it misleads students reading from the 'guest' position, confuses them, and delays their comprehension indefinitely. When the meaning of technical terms is far removed from the implications concerned, even reading from the "host" position, which Mr. Luk so admirably recommends, will not always prevent a reader from being misled.

There are too many stimulating statements in this book for quotation to cover them, but readers will be struck by such lines as Han Shan's (1546-1623) "Ordinary people mistake Ch'an for a doctrine, without knowing that Ch'an is but the self-mind which is beyond birth and death". (p. 56). And Tsu Pai's (1543-1604) "The secret of Ch'an training lies in your mind's ability to realise the oneness of all contraries such as adversity and prosperity, etc., and if you can achieve this your awakening will be imminent". (p. 62).

Anyone carefully reading the later detailed descriptions of the effects of some of the so-called "meditation" techniques is likely to realise what an impassable gulf separates all this from the pure and inspiring revelation of a Shen Hui, a Huang Po, or a Hui Hai. Perhaps the most extraordinary feature in this book is the Taoist chapter in which, after a brief but brilliant analysis of the opening verses of the Tao Teh Ching, probably the clearest exposition that exists in English, Mr. Luk passes without comment to quoting a modern dissertation on Taoist "meditation" that is as far from his introductory exposition as chiropody is from the Beatitudes.

With each new volume we are more deeply indebted to Mr. Luk, who was the first, after John Blofeld, to bring Ch'an to us. It has been a revelation to many, and he has many friends among us in consequence. The field is large, and much more awaits us, the choice among which, we may hope, will fall now to the early and most authentic Masters whose spoken doctrine is what we need - whatever we may imagine that we want, and we may now be confident that he can do it, for his scholarship and the profundity of his understanding have clearly been demonstrated.

- T. S. G.

COSMIC THEOLOGY: The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy of Pseudo-Denys: An Introduction. By Dom Denys Rutledge. (Routledge & Kegan Paul, Pp. 212. Price 32s.)

The Pseudo-Dionysius (or -Denys), writing as though a disciple of St. Paul's but thought to have lived actually in the fourth or fifth century, has been one of the most influential of all Christian mystics. Most widely known, because most universal, is his Mystical Theology. The far less known Ecclesiastical Hierarchy is, however, also of immense value to members of the Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches (it was written before the schism between them), and of theoretical interest to others, since its purpose is to point out the wealth of symbolism in the Church hierarchy and sacraments. This is shown as a system through which the Divine Light is canalised down to men and, in a simultaneous reverse movement, men are brought back to the Source of Light. In an age when ritual is apt to be ignorantly decried there can be few books which will so demonstrate its potential profundity.

A review of an earlier book by Dom Rutledge in *The Mountain Path* remarks on his absurdly vituperative attitude towards Hinduism.[1] It must be said that the present book, dealing with Christian mysteries only, is sober and profound. Even here, however, one wild statement creeps in. That is his

1 - *The Search of a Yogi*, reviewed in *The Mountain Path* of April 1964.

suggestion (on page 26) that a Catholic liturgical renewal may be the bond of reunion between East and West. What can that mean except that Protestants in the West and Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims and others in the East are all expected to become Catholics? This looks like the day-dreaming of a monastic recluse.

THE GENTLEMAN SAINT, ST. FRANCIS DE SALES AND HIS TIMES: 1567-1633: By Margaret Trouncer. (Hutchinson, Pp. 2401 Price 21s.)

This life of St. Francis de Sales is tailored to suit pious Catholics and they will love it. Others also will find much worth reading in it if they can persevere beyond the Little Lord Fauntleroy impression of the early chapters. His most characteristic work seems to have been the perilous one of giving spiritual direction to high-souled ladies. A man must indeed be a saint to avoid falling into at least one crevasse on such a path. There is great beauty and nobility in his life as indeed in these ladies also. For them he founded the Order of the Visitation, intended for ladies who were not robust enough to endure the rigours of the older contemplative orders - though in the early days their life seems to have been rigorous enough.

He was above all a saint of love, directing souls through loving sympathy. His books were expositions of the mysteries of Divine Love, the author tells us. She is very careful not to get out of her depth in speaking of them. His letters were exuberant with love. The scripture which particularly endeared itself to him was the Song of Solomon.

Yet he was virile and intrepid at the same time. To slip into Calvinist Geneva in disguise, as he did in his youth, in the hope of converting one of its great men to Catholicism was something like slipping into Stalin's Moscow to convert a member of the Politbiuro to democracy. He was unsparing, towards himself. To his charges also his love never made him soft or lenient.

- Sagittarius.

IHYA 'ULUM UD-DIN: The Revival of Religious Sciences: By Al-Ghazali. Translated by Bankey Behari. (Mata Krishna Satsang, Vrindaban, Pp. Ll and 432, Price Rs. ic.)

The customary reference to Al-Ghazali as the St. Thomas Aquinas of Islam hardly does him justice, for he did far more than stabilise Islamic theology: he made Sufism respectable in the eyes of the orthodox. No one has ever performed this service in Christianity, with the result that Christian mysticism and esoterism have never been accepted fully and without reservation by the guardians of the letter of the doctrine.

It is interesting to see what a pervading influence Christianity had on Sufism and on Al-Ghazali in particular. The doctrine is, of course impeccable, but the general tone, deprecating marriage in favour of celibacy and property in favour of mendicancy and claiming to be a miserable sinner is far less Quranic than Christian.

Not the least interesting feature about this abridged translation is that it is by a Hindu Sadhu and published by the Mata Krishna Satsang at Vrindaban. The English of it is far from perfect, but it is a labour of love and that it has been done at all is laudable.

- Abdullah Qutbuddin

(1) JAPJI; (2) ESSAY ON JAPJI: Both by Pritamdas Karamchandani, Pp. 110 and 345, Price Rs. 2.50 and Rs. 6. Available at Manjahad Darbar, 3rd Road, Khar, Bombay.

The Japji of Guru Nanak is a song of remembrance and self-consecration, *sumiran* and *saran*. It is the Gita of the Sikhs, the central hymn of the Granth Sahib, which is the sacred scripture of the followers of Nanak and Govinda Singh. In 38 Pauris or steps it brings out the disciplines of *karma, bhakti* and *jnana margas* which lead the devotee to a life of purity, unity and divinity. It turns the soul God-ward and its repetition cleans the mirror of the mind.

Lt. Colonel Karamehandani has done a great service in compiling the above two volumes of

commentaries and explanations on these sacred verses. The first is a clear annotation of the text and the second an elaborate treatise on it, containing references to the *Gita* and the Qur'an and to Western thinkers such as Spinoza, Kant, Schopenhauer, Jung, James, etc., as well as to Shankara and Ramana Maharshi. The greater part of it is composed of Vedantic discussions with Dharmadas, under whom he studied.

The author argues convincingly that the phenomenal world is illusion, the soul or Self the unique Reality, and God the pure Self of all. Liberation comes by love, prayer, *japa*, dedicated service or Vedantic *sadhana* of discrimination.

The first of the two books gives us the original text of the Japji in *devanagari* script as well as the translation. The second gives gem-like translations from Guru Granth, Kabir, Ravidas and the *Gita*. It is a pleasure to study them and to contemplate the sacred Japji which says: "Chant God's Name in the ambrosial pre-dawn: the bud of your soul shall open petal by petal into a fragrant flower. Conquer mind and you will conquer the world."

- Yogi Suddhananda Bharati

JOURNALS

We have received copies of the inaugural issue (January /February, 1964) of a bimonthly cyclo-styled newsletter entitled *The Path Divine* published by 'The Universal Self-Realization Centre' of Durban, South Africa. This refers to *The Mountain Path* and *The Call Divine* and is devoted mainly to the teaching of Ramana Maharshi.

We have also received the July Issue of the small monthly newspaper *Christian Yoga World* from San Francisco, California. This is the organ of a group run by Father Subramuniam. The issue received contains an article on Ramana Maharshi. In general the paper explains the truths of Hindu teaching and the underlying unanimity of the religions.

We have received the first issue of *Guru Vani*, the annual journal of Shree Gurudev Ashram. Gavdevi-Ganeshpuri, P.C. Vajreshwari. Dist. Thana, Maharashtra State. This ashram, about 55 miles outside Bombay, perpetuates the influence of the late Swami Nityananda through the person of his successor, Swami Muktananda. Impressions of both are here given from a wide range of devotees, including persons eminent in politics, law and other fields of activity, mostly in English, some also in Hindi and Marathi. They are on a remarkably high level and of real spiritual interest. The English in which they are written is also on a high level. The general getup and appearance of the annual are admirable. The editors are to be congratulated on launching this fine new annual.

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Ashram Bulletin

The arrival of a bimonthly newsletter from South Africa and a monthly paper from California, both noticed in our book review section, were two more signs how widespread is the influence of the Maharshi and the knowledge of his Ashram.

Another was a letter from Helsinki asking permission to translate some of the Maharshi's writings and sayings into Finnish.

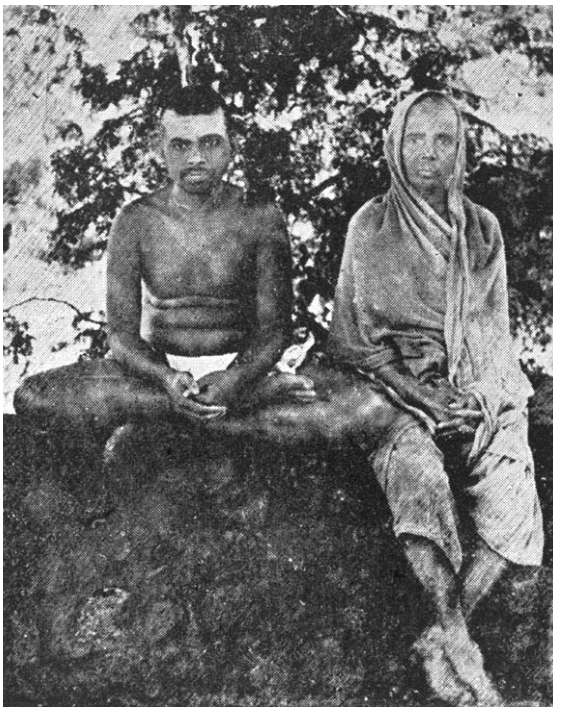
It has been a legitimate grievance of visitors here that Ashram library books have been shut away in old cupboards and not always easy to trace. The infant MOUNTAIN PATH library is now being combined with the more readable part of the Ashram library and put on display in show cases in THE MOUNTAIN PATH office and properly card indexed. When our building schemes are completed, the entire library will be on display and card indexed.

THE MOTHER'S DAY

Sri Ramanasramam never had an 'Ashram Mother' as so many ashrams do. Bhagavan was so universal that it was unnecessary. Besides, the direct path of Knowledge or Advaita that he taught does not involve worship of the *Shakti* or Mother. However, the *Shakti* influence may be helpful and was not neglected by Bhagavan, nor is it now by his Ashram. It came, very fittingly, through his own mother. When he was living at Skandashram on the Hill she came to live there and look after the small group of devotees who had gathered round him. A simple, unlettered woman, she lived a life of service and devotion. She died in 1922. The whole day Bhagavan sat beside her and through his concentration, aided by her own efforts, was able to quell the thought-waves so that at death she passed to Liberation.

She was buried at the southern foot of Arunachala where a number of graves, forming a sort of scattered cemetery, already existed. Bhagavan used to come down from Skandashram (less than half an hour's walk away) and sit there for a while daily. Then, after some time, he stayed. A thatched shed was put up for him and that was how the present Ashram started. Gradually the extensive ashram buildings were erected, and the process still continues. Through the perseverance of the *Sarvadhikari*[1] and the generosity of the devotees, a temple in traditional South Indian style was built over the shrine. It is there the SRI CHAKRA PUJA described in our April 1964 Ashram Bulletin is held. The anniversary of her death and Nirvana is celebrated annually. It fell this year on June 4.

A manuscript left by Alan Chadwick[1] records the extraordinary interest that the Maharshi took in the erection of his mother's shrine.

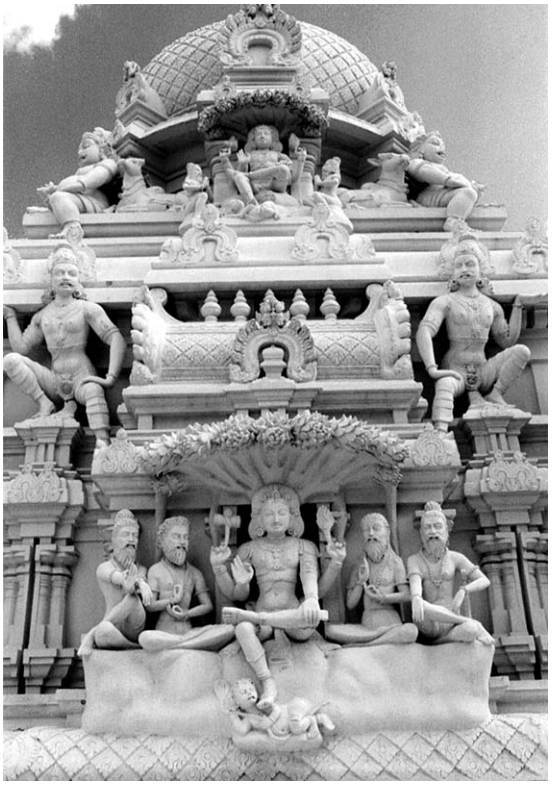


The Mother with the Maharshi

"Bhagavan was deeply interested in the construction of the shrine built over his mother's tomb. He attended every function in connection with it, placing his hands in blessing on the various objects that were to be enclosed in the walls. At

1 - For whom see our Ashram Bulletin of January 1964.

night when no one was about he would walk round and round the construction, consecrating it. That he should take such a demonstrative interest in anything was extremely rare and has been doubted



Tower over Mother's Shrine

by many, but I myself was an eye-witness to these things and can vouch for their truth."

SAINT'S DAY CELEBRATED

August 15th is India's Independence Day and therefore a public holiday. For the last ten years it has also been observed as the anniversary celebration of Arunagirinathar, a great Tamil poet-saint of Tiruvannamalai. He lived about five centuries ago. His mother died when he was a boy and left him in the care of his elder sister, charging her to refuse him nothing that he asked for. As he grew up he fell into a life of debauchery, constantly coming to his sister for the money it required. The climax came one day when he wanted money for the usual purpose and she told him she had no more and said: "If you must have a woman take me." This provoked one of those sudden reversals which sometimes turn a sinner into a saint. Overcome with shame and self-loathing, he rushed to the great temple (of which there is a photograph on page 106 in our issue of April 1964), climbed one of the *gopurams* or towers and, considering himself unfit to live, cast himself down. However, the intensity of his repentance awakened Divine compassion and he was borne up and came to the ground gently without harm. He became a great saint and poet. Some fifteen hundred of his poems still survive and are widely sung, although this is only a small portion of what he is reputed to have composed. Bhagavan often quoted them or referred to them.

There was a large gathering for the occasion this year, both at the Ashram and in the town, People came from all parts of the Tamil country and music, *bhajans*, lectures and processions were arranged for them.

PERSONAL NOTES

Early in August, a group of about 20 Americans with their Indian guides came to see the Ashram from Madras. They were told about the Maharshi, after which a number of them walked round Arunachala barefoot at night. They left the next day.

Miss Ethel Merston has returned from a medical check-up in Madras as lively and alert as ever but no longer able to venture out - severe *tapas* for one who has been a great mover and traveller all her life.

A severe *tapas* has been imposed by destiny on Ronald Rose also, in that, prodigious reader as he has always been, he is suffering from eyestrain and has had to give up reading. Fortunately we already had our quota of book reviews in hand from him before this restriction overtook him.

Mrs. Taleyarkhan has returned from several weeks' recuperation in Bombay looking much better again and with her exuberant vitality restored.

Sri Kuppuswami Aiyar who was formerly a visitor here has returned now as a resident in one of the small Ashram cottages and is a valued office worker.

MY REAL HOME

Following the *Mahasamadhi* of Swami Ramdas in July 1963, one American lady and two French came here. The American, Theodora (Teddy) Schleicher, known as INDIRA, seemed inclined to settle down here permanently but, after a stay of many months, has now returned to her home in California on the request of her parents.

"I was first led to India and to my personal guide, Swami Ramdas, by Joel Goldsmith. My path was one of simple *bhakti*. Gradually, however, I was introduced to Bhagavan's teaching and Self-enquiry deepened my understanding of *bhakti*. For I realised that *Jnana* and *bhakti* were inseparable since *Jnana* led me to the real love of Self, which is not dependent on external support.

"Bhagavan to me is the highest Godhead. I cannot think of Him as a personality. He is the very personification of Pure Being, not restricted to the limited body. Bhagavan is an accumulation of dynamic energy which, like a magnet, pulls one into its very Being or God-Centre."

"I feel that this dynamic Power, call it Arunachala or Bhagavan, has led me to my real home, the home within."

BRIGETTE SUNDIN stayed for a long time as a guest of Mrs. Taleyarkhan, but she also has now left.

MARYAM HIRN is still here, staying in a rented house, outside the Ashram, and shows no inclination to leave.

We have also had a long-term visitor from Denmark and one from Germany.

JORGEN CHRISTOPHERSON of Copenhagen had seen *The Mountain Path* and corresponded with us before coming. He came here straight from Denmark in July. Before the end of August he too had to return and he went straight back, wasting no time on tourism.

FR1TZ KREIE came here direct from Germany in January, 1964, says: "I was deeply impressed and felt at home from the first moment. After a few months I left on a tour that had already been arranged, of some of the other reputed holy places of India, but it was not difficult for me to recognise, that at Sri Ramanasramam alone could I find what I was seeking, so I was soon back here and stayed till I was due to return to Germany at the end of August."

R. V. RACHAVAN, a retired sub-inspector of police, was a long-standing devotee. He had been resident at the Ashram for some years past and had taken on the duty of guiding visitors round. He passed away suddenly and quite unexpectedly on the morning of September 2nd.

FORTHCOMING FESTIVALS

1. NAVARATHRI CELEBRATIONS: From 6.10.1964 to 15.10.1964: (Laksharchana, with Mahanyasa Rudrabhishekam and *parayana* of sacred works such as Devi Mahathmyam is performed. Sri Yogambika, the deity, is decorated and worshipped in the different aspects of the Divine Mother.)
2. KARTHIGAI DEEPAM: 19.11.1964 (The famous Deepam Day when a big cauldron is lit on top of the Mountain Arunachala. The Festival proper commences from the 11.11.64, lasting for ten days.)
3. SRI BHAGAVAN'S JAYANTHI: 21.12.1964, (The 85th birthday of the Maharshi).

So long as you have the ego-sense you have to struggle. At the end of the struggle you come to know that you have not achieved anything. You feel that you are helpless. Then God comes to your help. But as long as you think you can help yourself you must struggle. Struggle ceases in surrender. Thereafter you say, 'Oh God, You do everything.' Now you find everything is done by His will and power. Surrender gives you this knowledge. The ego-sense is wiped out not only in the inner silence but also in all your active life. — *Swami Ramdas.*

Letters to the Editor

Your journal is indeed fine. I have always thought that a journal from Tiruvannamalai should be published to propagate Bhagavan's teaching. In my 'The Flute Calls Still'* there is a letter on Bhagavan. I wonder if you would care to print it in your quarterly?** I will write to you later on about your fine (July issue) editorial, which Indira Devi too has liked - she says, she has a very good 'feel' about your journal.

- Dilip Kumar Roy,
Hari Krishna Mandir, Poona.

'The Mountain Path' is indeed a very instructive and inspiring journal. The first issue was good, the second issue better, and the third still better. It contains very good articles by many devotees who have had some experiences by contact with Bhagavan. The articles intensify the aspirants' devotion for Bhagavan and thus give them an impetus in their efforts to attain the goal Bhagavan has shown. They also whet the appetite of earnest seekers to absorb more the teachings of Bhagavan and realise His eternal Presence. The journal is surely serving its purpose.

- Satchidananda, Secretary of
Anandashram, Kanhangad,

Thoughtfully written, your article on 'Vegetarianism' which appeared in the issue of 'The Mountain Path' of April 1964 is thought-provoking and bears the touch of wisdom.

It is a great pity that even in our predominantly Hindu India those who use the flesh of dead animals for food still predominate.

I whole-heartedly welcome your quarterly which is full of interesting and instructive articles. May it grow in usefulness and wide circulation.

- Krishnanand, Shanti Ashram,
Bhadran, Gujerat.

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* - Reviewed elsewhere in this issue - Editor.

** Published under 'How I came to the Maharshi.' - *Editor*.

Your editorials are charming, instructive and revealing. Lord Radha Krishna's grace and blessings be on you.

- Bankey Behari, Mata Krishna Satsang,
Vrindaban,

Allow me to congratulate you on your noble presentation of Self-wisdom in *The Mountain Path*. With the grace of a rare Guru behind you and that essential background of wisdom traditions which are found in such perfection in South India, your journal is almost alone in the midst of so much trashy literature that all lovers of *brahma-vidya* must rejoice at its appearance.

Since it is in English and therefore intended not only for Indian readers but for a world audience, this is a further encouraging feature; for I believe there are thousands of sincere seekers in the West who need *The Mountain Path* and the truth it represents. So many silly books have been written about yogis and swamis, and so many impostors and adventurers have exploited the subject, that it is most encouraging to have something honest and sincere, with a genuine Teacher in the forefront, to set aright this tragic state of affairs.

Only those like myself who have been trying to do the same thing - and needless to say welcome this strong support in the common aim - know how hard the editorial job must be, and how well you are succeeding.

Your editorials are most refreshing. The July one where you deal with Krishnamurti says things that needed saying about that paradoxical personality who for fifty years has been overcompensating himself for his early conditioning by Leadbeater and others.

- John Spiers, Editor, Values.

Congratulations on your last editorial. It made very clear something which few people on the spiritual path seem to get straight: the difference between a glimpse of higher consciousness and permanent realization.

- Marguerite Lidchi, Editor,
World Union-Goodwill, Pondicherry,

I should like to tell you what pleasure I have got from reading the first three issues of your magazine *The Mountain Path*. Everything in it is of high quality. It is a fine tribute to the unforgettable Ramana Maharshi.

Your editorial 'Where Charity Begins' in the second issue particularly impressed me. It is completely in the spirit of the Master, a spirit which I am trying to assimilate as well as I can.

- Professor Andrieu,
Lyon, France,

This quarterly journal is magnificent and I regret not to know enough English to express my admiration and satisfaction.* With regard to the pictures of Sri Ramana, of the Mountain and of devotees, I agree completely with what the Editor says in reply to the letter from J.G. of Alabama (see Letters to the editor in the April 1964 edition). We are very happy to see, among worldly sights, the serene face of one who is established in the true vision and can help us to attain it also. It is indeed a blessed contact. Altogether I appreciate the Editor's answers to the letters. They seem expressed in the spirit of the Maharshi. And I love the editorials. If I start to mention all the things I like it would be too long, I love very much the quotations and poems here and there, permitting us to meet with friends by turning the pages (Tukaram, Shankara, Hui-Neng, Milarepa) - blessed meetings! Also the Ashram Bulletin.

- '*Krishna*' Paris

* From here on the English has been edited, -*Editor*.

I am a subscriber to your quarterly *The Mountain Path* and would like to say what a tremendous help it has been to me. In fact it has become a sort of 'daily bread' for me, in spite of the fact that the very high spiritual level of this path is far far above my inner comprehension. The 'hypnotism of the world' (as Joel Goldsmith so aptly names it in your issue of April 1964) still drags me down too much. It is so difficult to remember all the time that the difficulties and problems are of the relative plane or *Maya*; and even when we do remember what a terrible challenge it presents! I was particularly interested in Goldsmith's 'Infinite Way of Life ' as I too have felt that, since God is One, all is One Perfect, Infinite Being, and disease and sorrow and sin have no place in it, that we see them as such through some error of ours or that the idea of Oneness in all and One Perfect Being is just nonsense - but the second proposition just doesn't hold water - it reduces all life, all being, everything, to utter chaos.

I can imagine Bhagavan Sri Ramana nodding approvingly at Goldsmith with his wonderfully kind and understanding smile. You can imagine how bitterly I regret not to have sat at the great Sage's feet in his lifetime! I envy those happy souls whom he initiated by a look, allowing them to have a flash of realization of the Truth through his Grace and blessing.

- Mary N. Kanny, Bombay

Yes, it was a tremendous experience; but remember that the Grace and the blessing are still the same. As S. P. Mukherjee wrote in his poem in our January 1964 issue "The body-presence, the presence in the heart. These are the same." - Editor.

May I send you my deep appreciation for *The Mountain Path*. I have read the copies several times. I am especially grateful for the picture of Ramana Maharshi. Such a serene and beautiful face. Sometimes looking at it I have to cry. Again I want to touch it. I can't seem to look at it enough. If only I could have seen him, been in his presence, received his initiation!

Articles that I keep re-reading are: 'Self-Enquiry' by D. E. Harding, 'Outside the Scriptures' by Dr. Krishnaswami, 'Living the Infinite Way' by Joel Goldsmith and your editorials and book reviews. And thank you for the article on Vegetarianism.

- Mrs. H. L. Cavanagh, California.

Don't be grieved. His initiation still comes to those who turn to him - Editor.

To write in a matter-of-fact way about my impressions after going through the various articles, poems and pictures of *The Mountain Path* seems to me out of place. I simply feel that the journal is just as it ought to be and as I would wish it to be. In it heart speaks to heart and therefore every seeker on the lonely road to Realization and all devotees of Sri Bhagavan will feel the divine message conveyed through it.

May the Grace of Sri Bhagavan which I feel so

abundantly flowing through *The Mountain Path* be with the journal constantly and bring peace and bliss not only to all readers but equally to the publisher, the editors and the entire staff!

- R. Fuchsberger, Bratislava, Czechoslovakia.

The first three copies of *The Mountain Path* have proved a source of real help, comfort and inspiration and will continue to bring a constant supply of spiritual nourishment from the Ashram. It is with much admiration for the worthy efforts of all concerned in making the journal such a beacon light in these times that I should be most happy to take out a life subscription to *The Mountain Path*.

- Peter Bright, Paignton, Devon,

Wei Wu Wei's articles hit off and release and elucidate my own position better than anything I've ever come across - he speaks exactly my own language, only so very much better than I ever could.

The Hindu '3' with a squiggle at its back - what does it mean?

- E. Grace Blanchard, Shrewsbury.

The symbol printed at the head of our 'contents' page and at the head of the editorial is OM, the first and greatest of the mantras - Editor.

(To S, P. Mukherji) I read your life in the 'Ashram Bulletin' of *The Mountain Path* of July 1964. I have no words to express my feelings about our Gurudev Sri Bhagavan Ramana for having granted Your Prayer, I have been praying for the same thing for the last ten years. Let Bhagavan take his own time to bless me. Really you are very near to his *Chidananda Rupa*. I can therefore only request you to bless your brother.

- C. N. Shastry, Saidapur, Dharwar.

Sweet to the thought, sweet to the ear, sweet to the mouth, is *The Mountain Path*. It will bring Bhagavan's Grace to many thousands who are hungrily reaching out for peace and enlightenment.

- M. Thangavel, Pondicherry,

When I go on asking myself (of course, not verbally) who I am I become silent and enter the state of not-knowing. I do not know anything. And I don't go further. May I ask you whether there is any further step. After a time I become normal and my ordinary mind starts functioning.

- Raja of Bhor, Poona.

Surely this not knowing anything does not mean becoming unconscious like a block of wood? The 'I' which knows things objectively as separate from itself may cease to function, but in its place a state of pure awareness arises - or you could call it pure being, pure conscious being. This is normal. To lose it again is abnormal, even though usual. It can be retained side by side with, or rather underlying, what we call 'normal' consciousness of an apparently objective world. That is what we aim at. It is to be accomplished by persistent steady effort and while retaining consciousness. - Editor.

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